CORNUCOPIA

TURKEY FOR CONNOISSEURS

ISSUE 41 2009

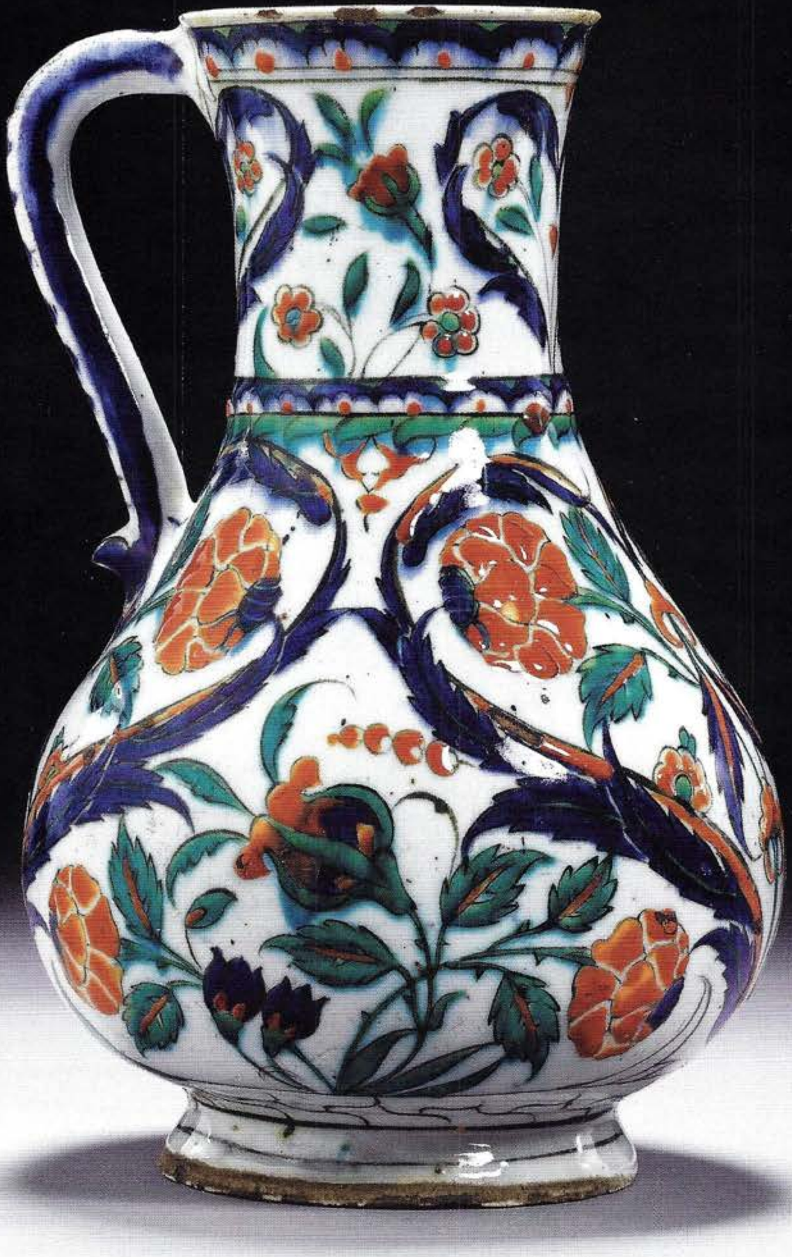
BATHING BEAUTY

INSIDE ISTANBUL'S GRAND HAMMAMS

THE PRIVATE WORLD OF SELIM III

HOW BODRUM LOST ITS MARBLES

PLUS
BOOKS SPECIAL



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Photographs by Fritz von der Schulenburg

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Photograph by Fritz von der Schulenburg. Courtesy of the Sadberk Hanım Museum, Istanbul

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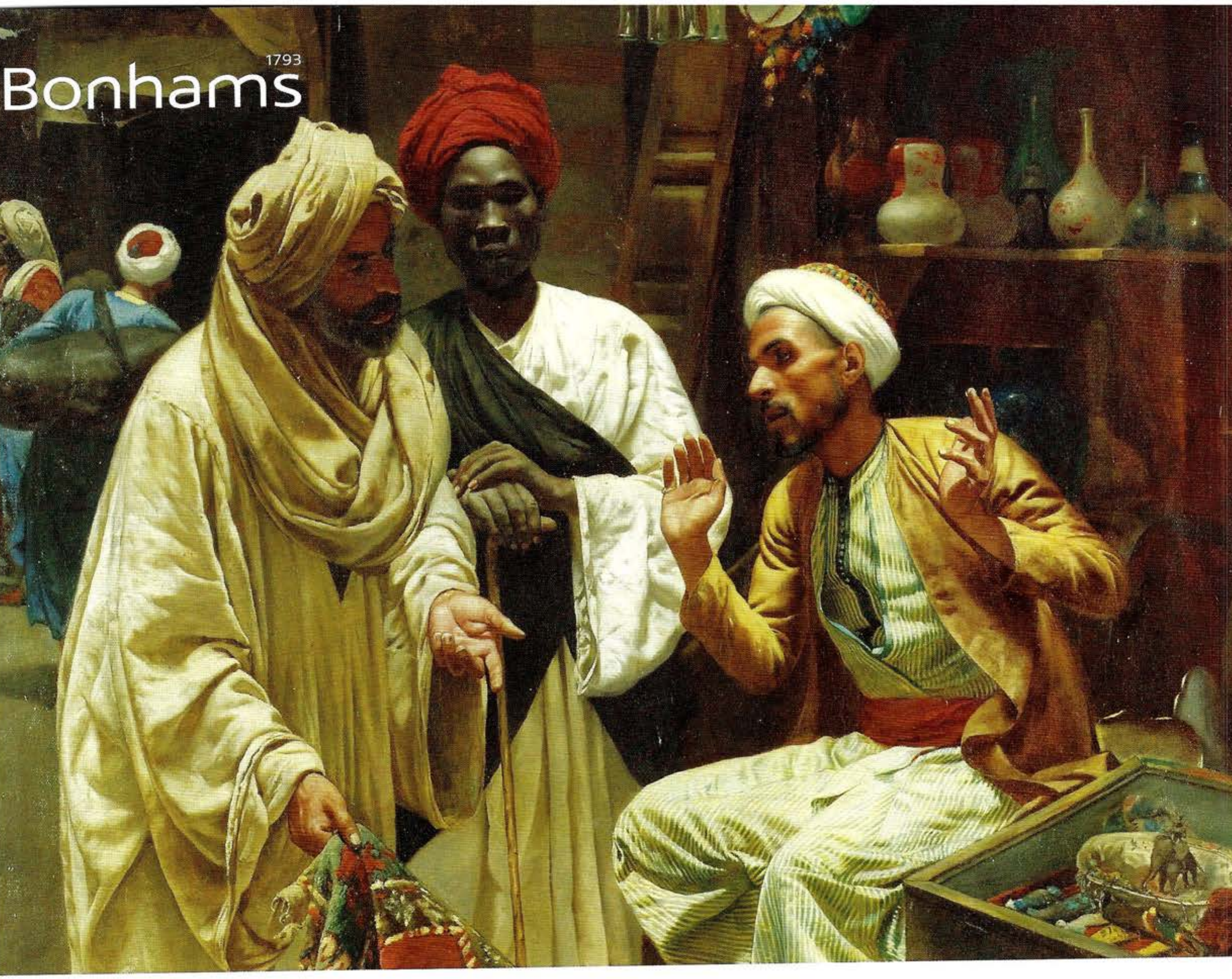

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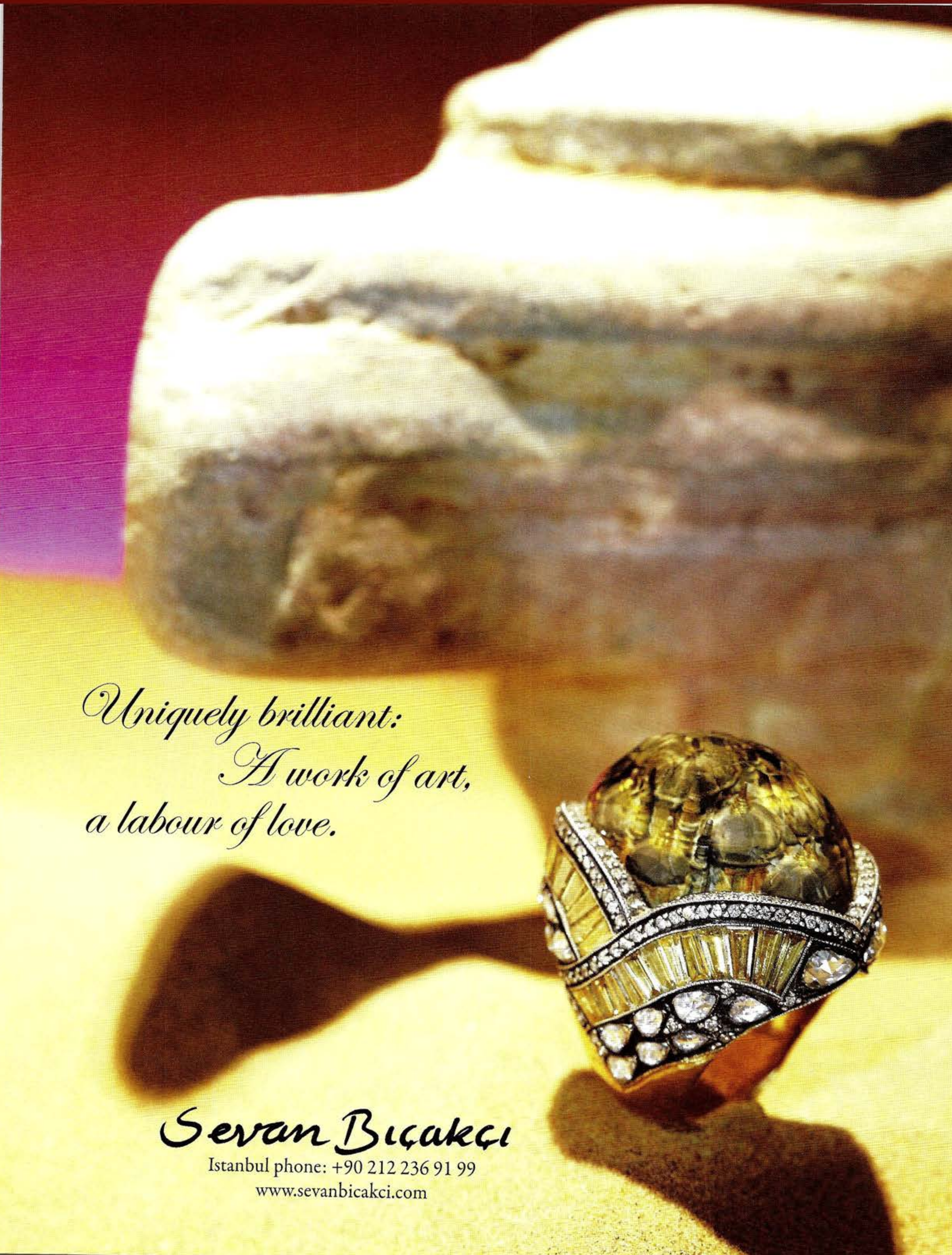
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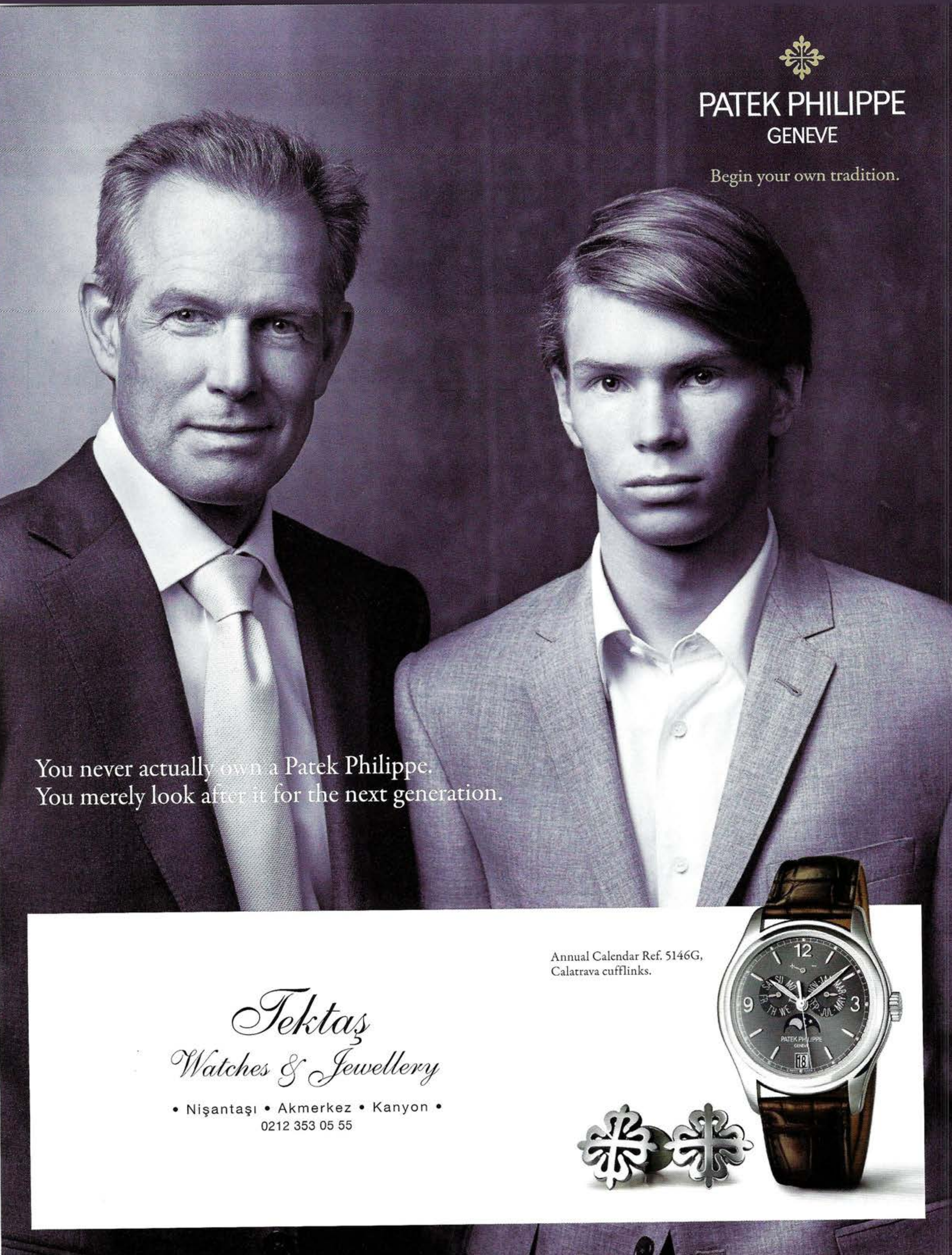
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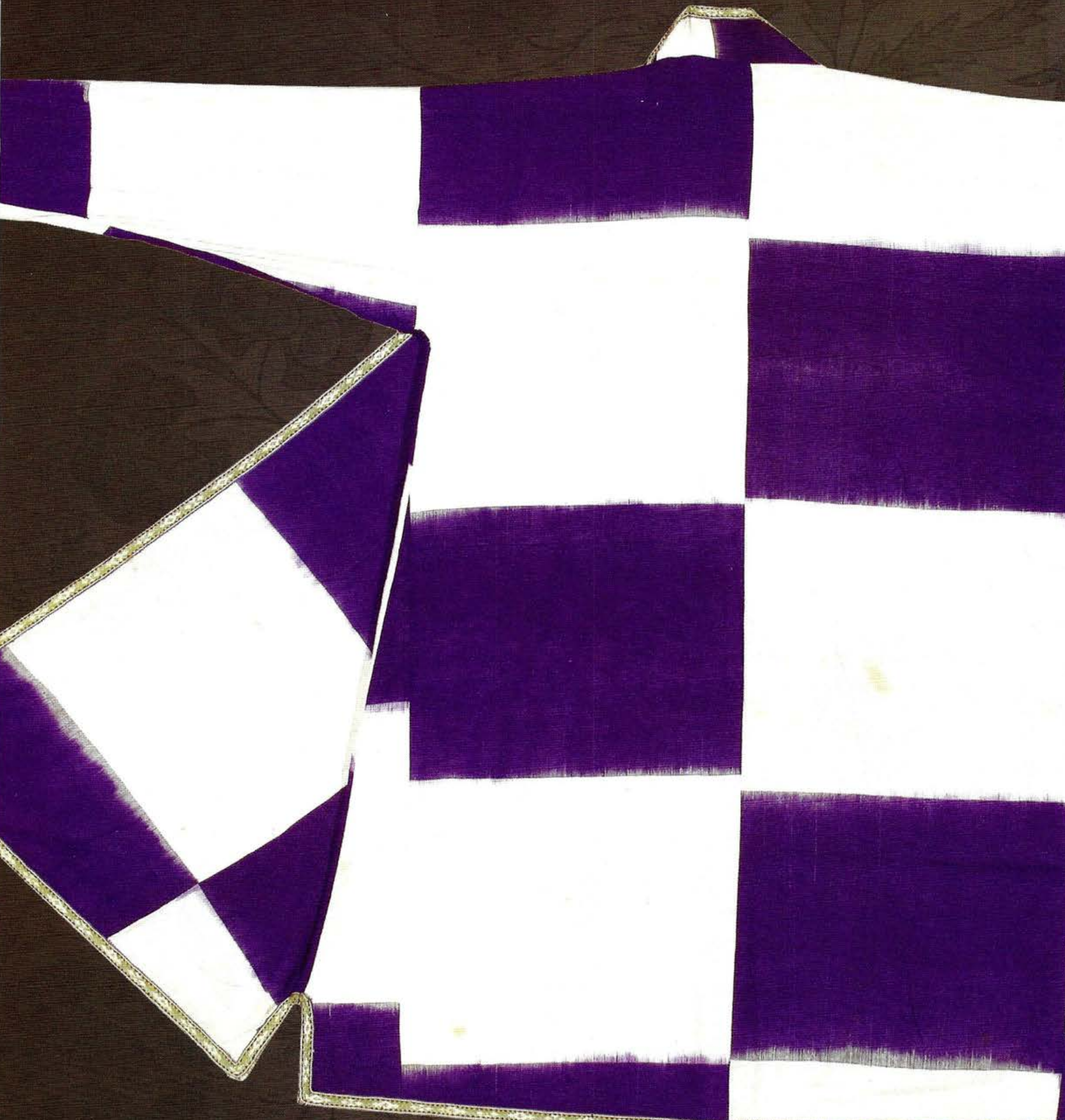

Ikat chapan, early 20th century, Uzbekistan

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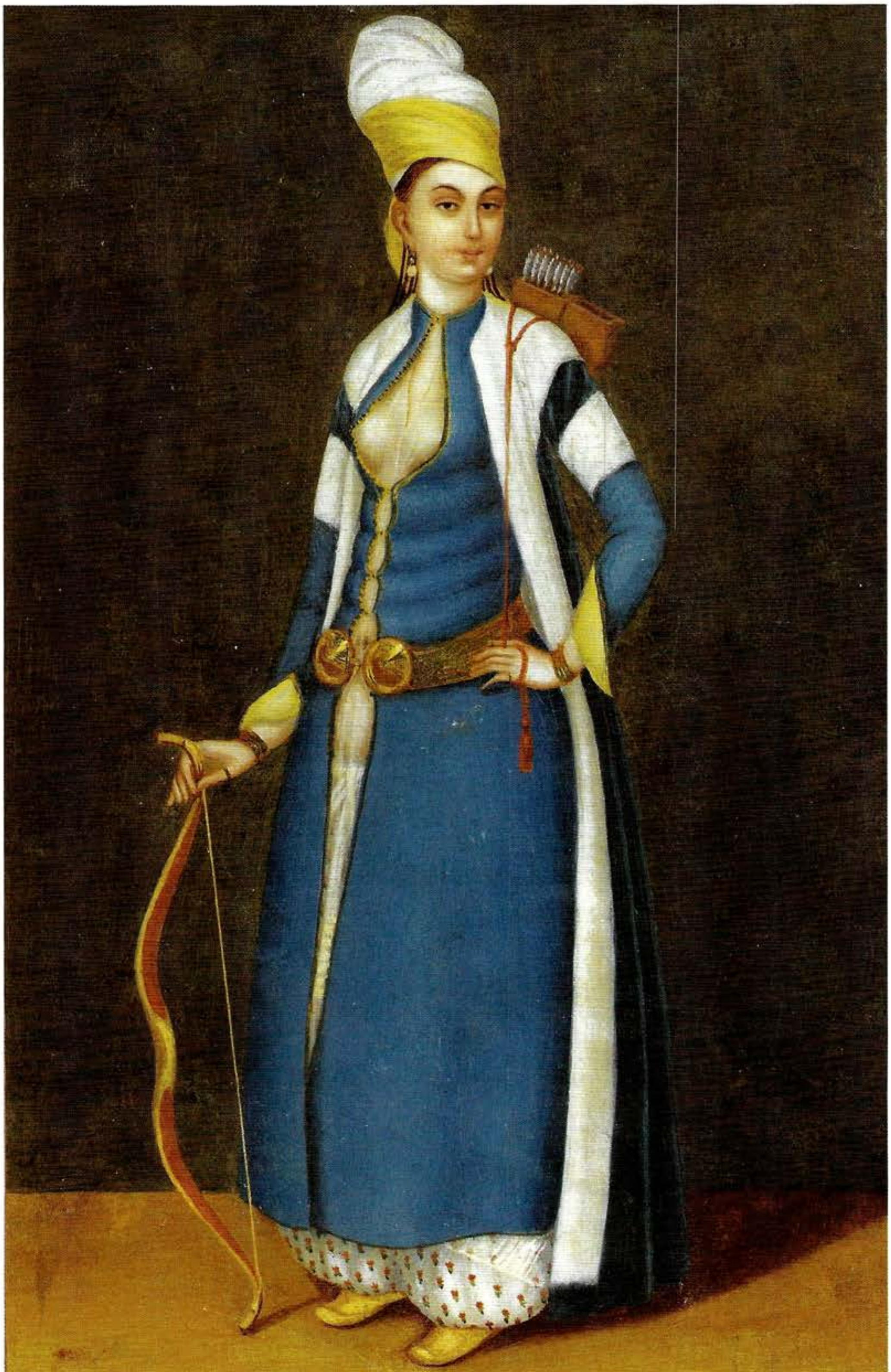
Polychrome, underglaze-painted, stoneware Iznik plate.
Photograph by Fritz von der Schulenburg

PHILIP MANSEL REVIEWS A HISTORIC EXHIBITION AT THE TOPKAPI, 'SELIM III: REFORMIST, POET AND MUSICIAN'

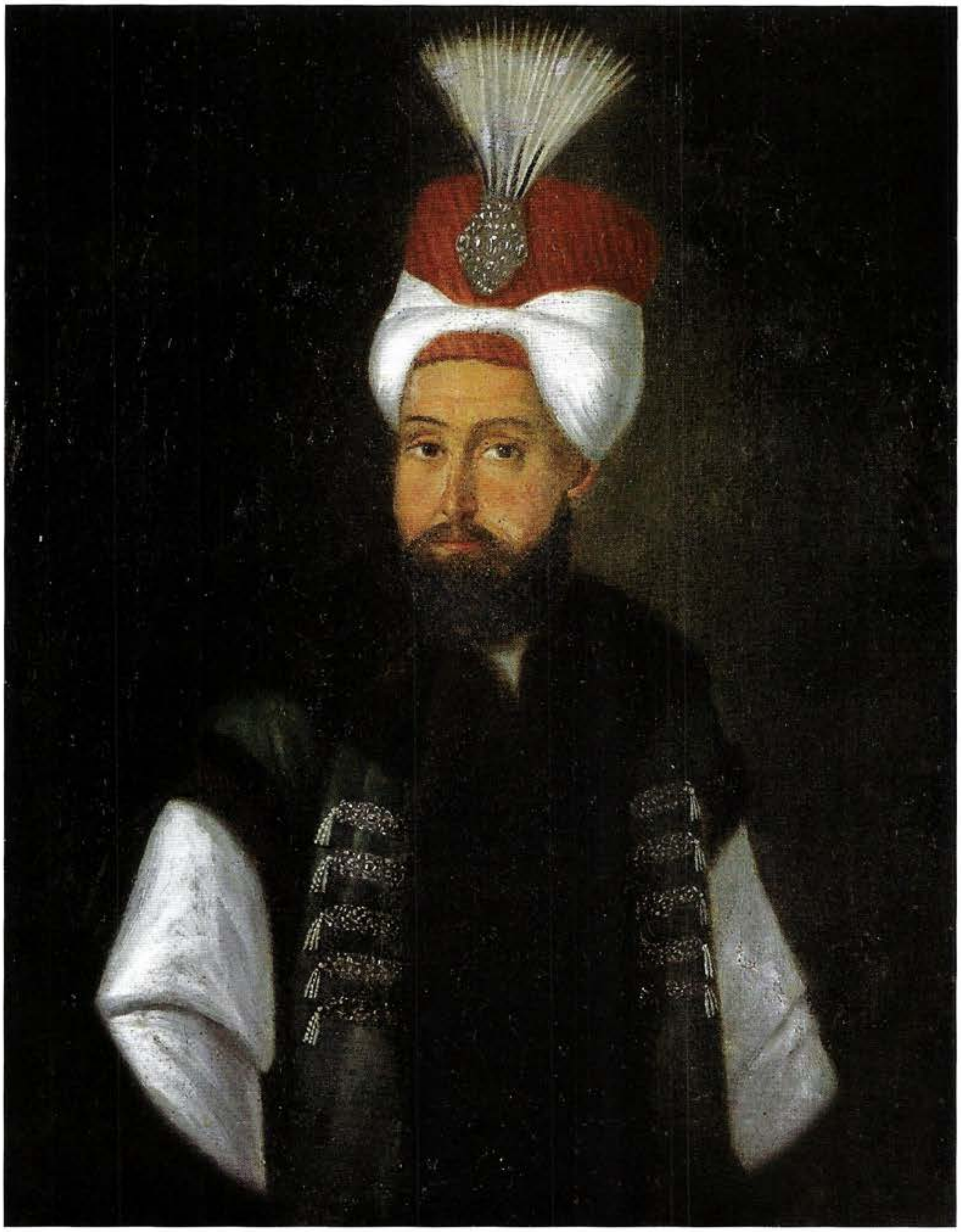
Eastern enlightenment

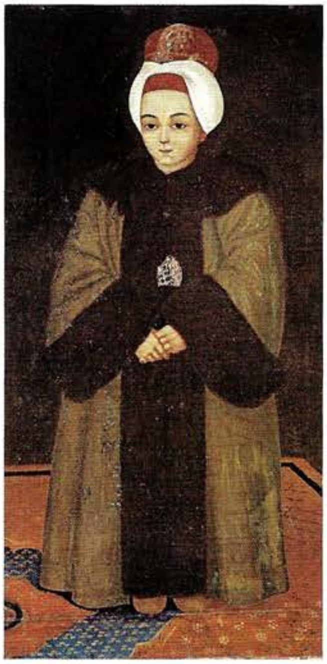
Selim III was a world figure. The decisions made during his reign, from 1789 to 1807, affected the independence of Egypt, the birth of Saudi Arabia and the identity of Albania, as well as the future of Turkey. He reigned at a time when the Ottoman Empire seemed, as he wrote, to be "breaking up". It had been defeated by Russia and Austria in the war of 1787–91. *Derebeys* – lords of the rivers – throughout the empire won control of outlying provinces from the central government. The most famous were Ali Pasha in southern Albania and Kavalalı Mehmed Ali in Egypt. Wahhabis seized and sacked Mecca in 1803 and Medina in 1805, several times interrupting Muslims' annual pilgrimage to the two holy places. These signs of weakness encouraged Selim III to be the first Ottoman sultan openly to pursue a policy of modernisation. To the disgust of many Janissaries, ➢



A WOMAN ARCHER, RAFAEL, 1770–80

This oil on paper by Rafael, one of the two court painters in Selim III's day, demonstrates how life for women at the Ottoman court became much more open. As well as being skilled at archery, they composed music, kept accounts and had dealings with tradesmen. This archer has a very direct gaze and wears strikingly revealing attire. Her hair is fashionably wound up in a high *hotoz*, while her low-cut blue *entari* is worn over a transparent chiffon blouse, which contrasts with her pendant earrings and chunky belt





he began to introduce Western-style drill and uniforms into the army, which by 1806 had reached a strength of 22,000.

Traditionally, the Treaty of Paris of 1856 at the end of the Crimean War is held to mark the entry of the Ottoman Empire into "the Concert of Europe", the system of treaties and agreements linking the European powers. In reality it had entered Europe's diplomatic system under Selim III, if not before.

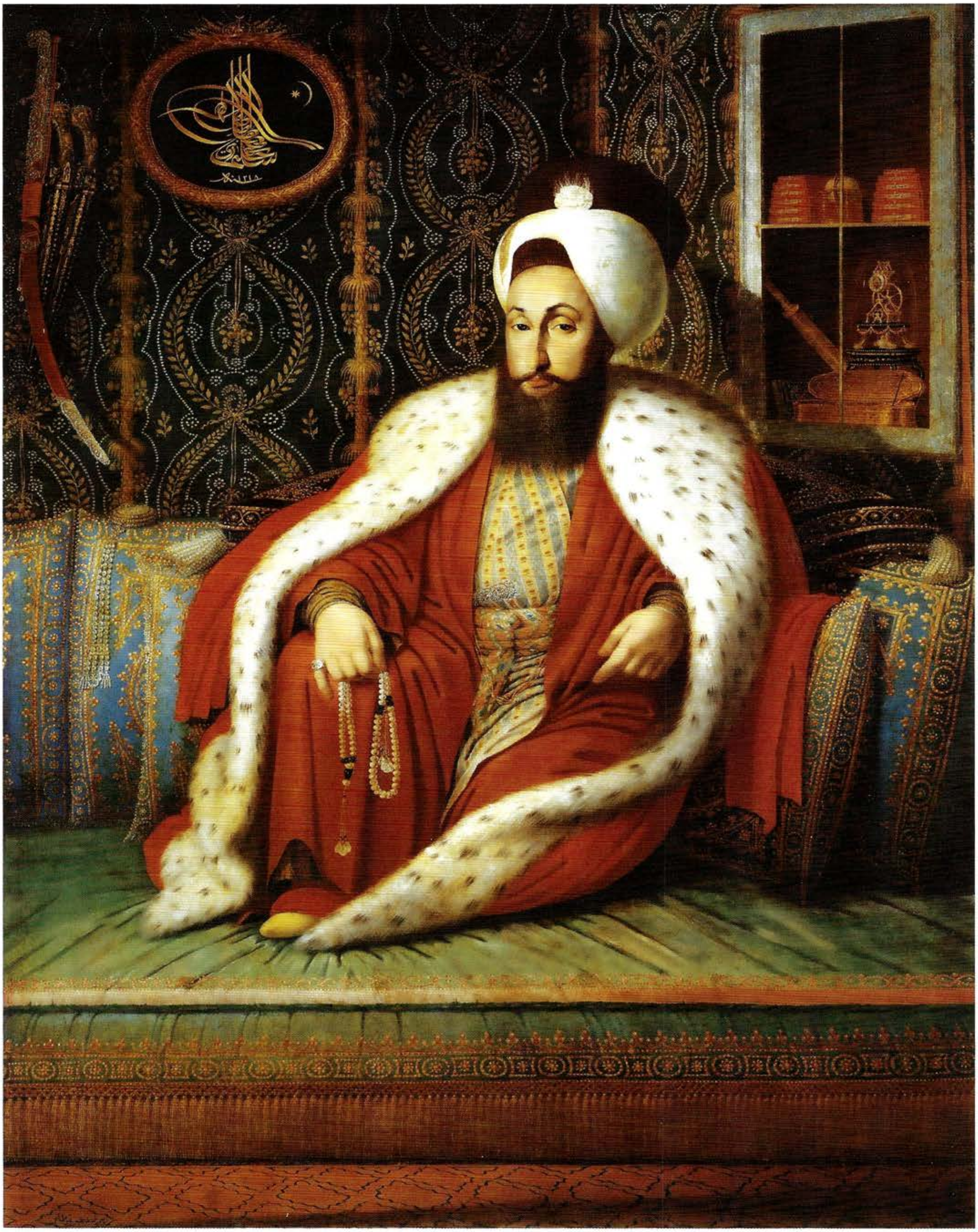
Selim III was the first Ottoman sultan to establish permanent embassies abroad, in London and Vienna in 1793. He also made formal written alliances with Christian powers. The first were with Prussia and Sweden. When those two governments failed to observe their agreements, the Sultan remarked: "Infidels are so unreliable." In 1799, in order to secure help in expelling the French army from the Ottoman province of Egypt, Selim III allied with Russia and Britain. For his victory at the Battle of the Nile, Admiral Nelson was rewarded by the

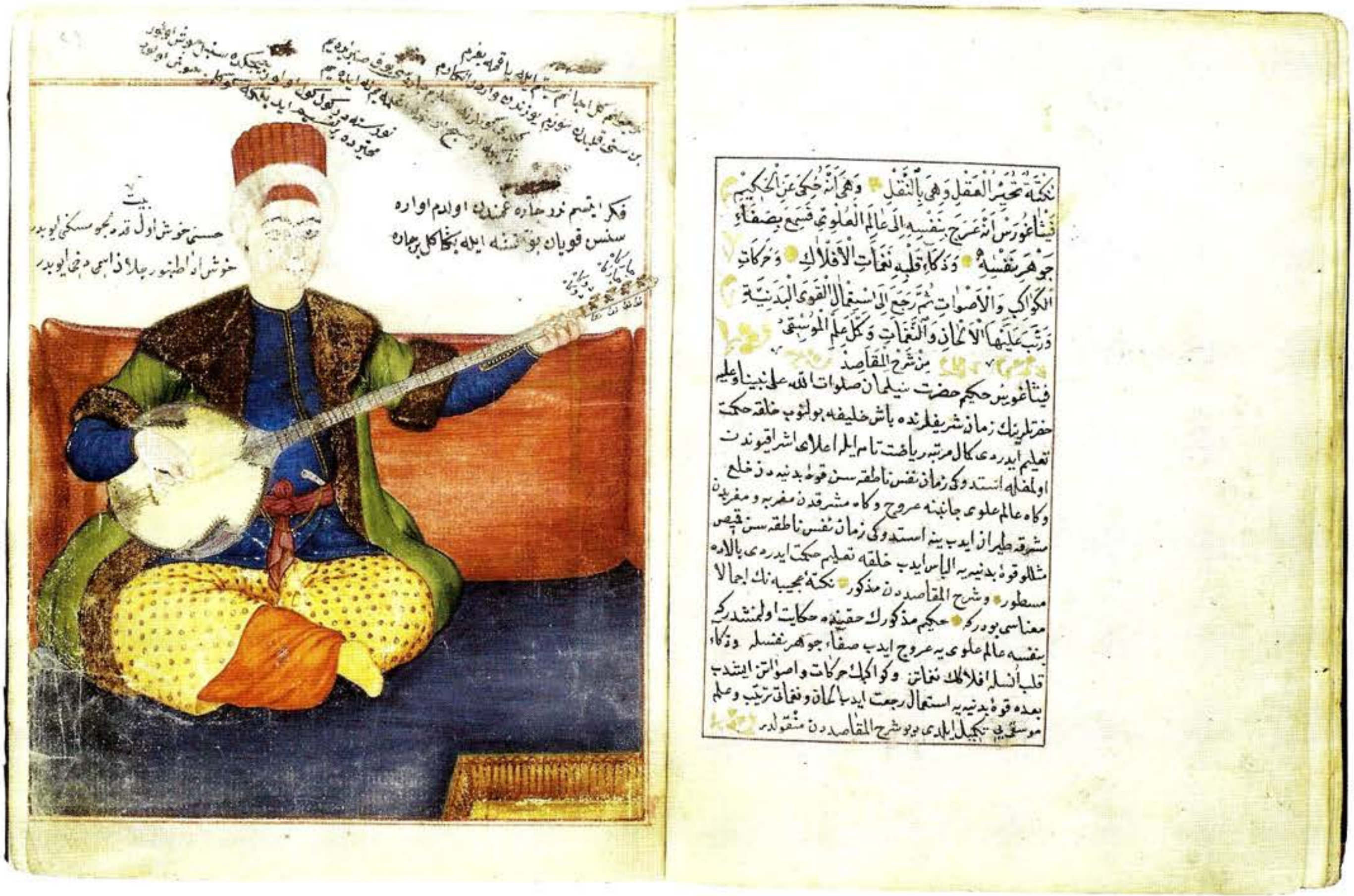
FROM CROWN PRINCE TO SULTAN: THREE PORTRAITS OF SELIM

△ The picture of Selim at the age of 12 is by the court artist Rafael (who also painted the female archer on the previous page). The pose is conventional, but the shadowing on the face and hands is a new departure

◁ The 1792 portrait of the Sultan at the age of 31, by the French artist Duchâteau, was neither signed nor dated. But it became a familiar icon in the West with its publication in London in 1796. Turkey and Great Britain became allies in 1799

▷ Kapıdağlı Konstantin's intimate portrait of Selim, aged 40, was painted in his private chamber in the Topkapı harem. Though it is Western in style, the Sultan sits on a *sedir*, worry beads in hand, the very image of the enlightened Eastern potentate. He wears comfortable if opulent clothes – a fur-lined robe over a kaftan and a striped *entari*. (This striped fabric, seen in detail left, is known as 'selimiye'.) Around the room are indications of his pursuits as well as of the New Order he longed to inspire: a scimitar and pistols, a globe and telescope, manuscripts, a pen box, and, sitting beside him on a cushion, a sofa clock. Many of the objects – including the sofa clock – are still in the palace collection. The date 1218 (1803) appears in the imperial monogram (*tuğra*) on the wall





grateful Sultan with a jewelled aigrette. For the first time Russian warships were allowed to sail through the Bosphorus.

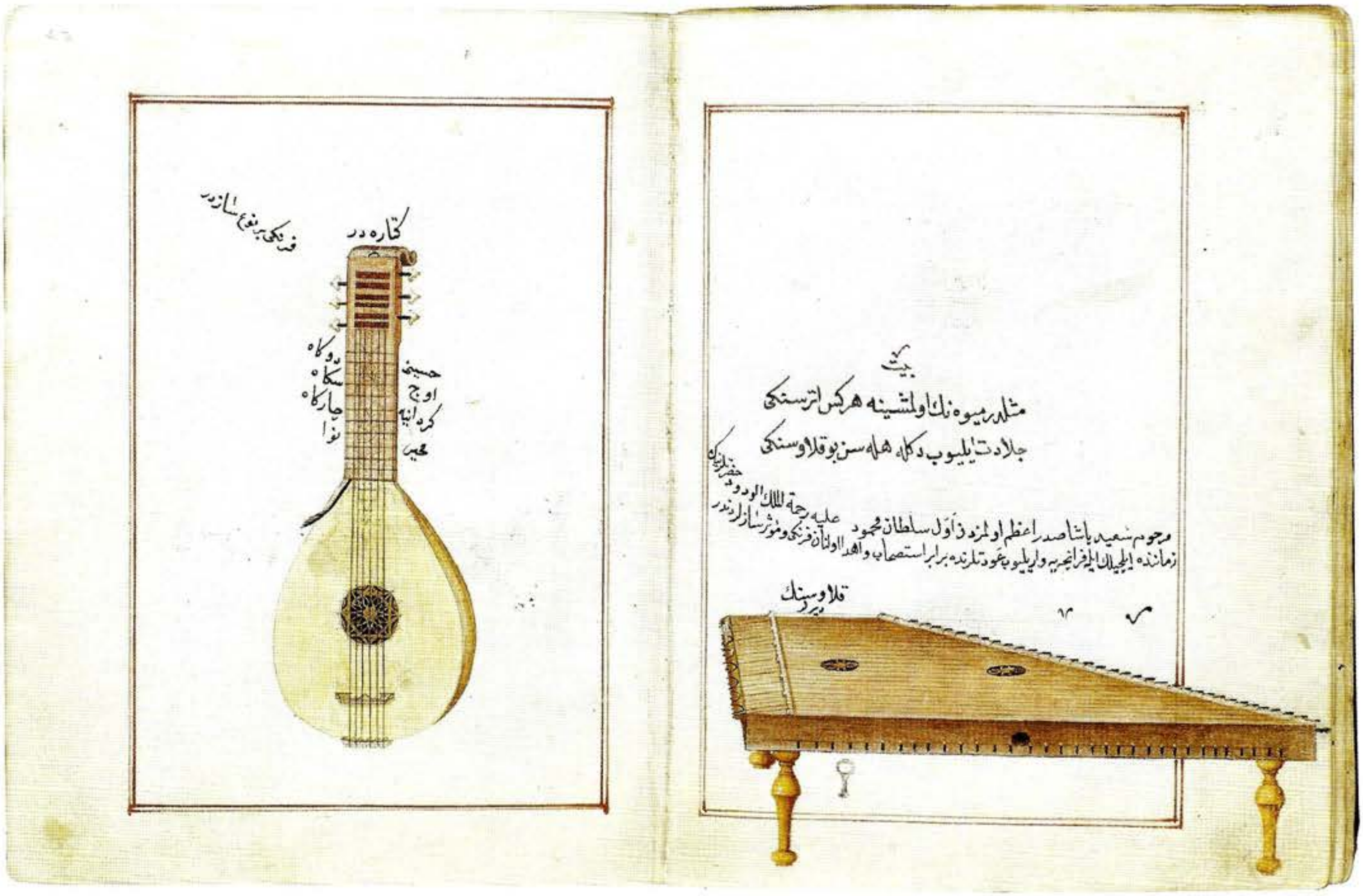
Last year was the 200th anniversary of Selim III's murder by rebellious soldiers in the Topkapı Palace, one year after he was deposed by a Janissary revolt. To commemorate this grim anniversary, the Topkapı Palace Museum held a special exhibition on the Sultan in the palace stables, a few metres from the site of his murder. As one of the great dynastic treasure-houses of the world, the Topkapı has the luxury of being able to mount exhibitions largely from its own resources. The *Surre-i Humayun* exhibition in early 2008 displayed some of the treasures offered every year during the Hajj by Ottoman sultans to the shrine at Medina, where the Prophet is buried. They had been returned to Istanbul in 1917 by the Ottoman military commander Fahri Pasha to stop them falling into the hands of the allied forces fighting the Ottomans in the Hejaz. The silver, jewellery and manuscripts displayed showed the elaborate preparations and vast expenditure devoted, every year, by the Ottoman government to the Hajj and the two holy cities. The Ottoman Empire paid a very high price for ruling its Arab subjects.

The present exhibition shows Selim III as a musician, poet and calligrapher, rather than a ruler. Visitors can admire some of his firmans, textiles, costumes, jewels, weapons and musical instruments, to the sound of the beguiling, melancholy music that he composed. One of the great Ottoman imperial portraits, of Selim III painted by Kapıdağlı Konstantin in 1803, is displayed next to the Sultan's French clock, which appears in a corner of the picture. Also on show are some of the engraved portraits of sultans commissioned by Selim III in London in 1796. The

THE MUSICAL WORLD OF SELIM III

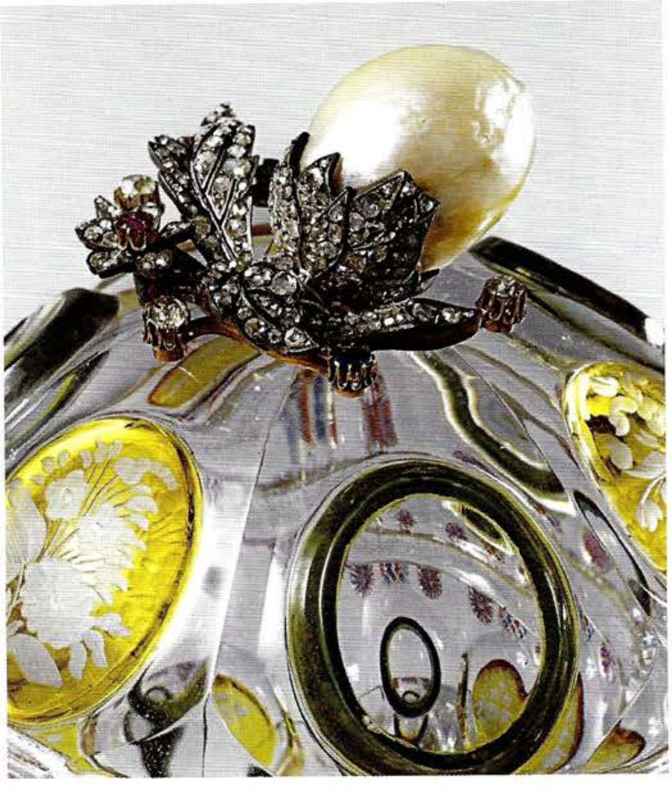
△ ◁ A musician plays a *tambur* similar to one traditionally thought to be Selim's own (left), now in the Sadberk Hanım Museum.

▷ Opposite top: these folios are early 19th-century illustrations to Hızır Ağa's treatise on modes and airs, subjects close to Selim's heart. On the left is an *ud*, on the right a tabletop *kanun*. The Sultan not only had a passion for music; he was a pivotal figure, helping to keep classical Turkish music alive, and even overseeing the annotation of the classical Turkish repertoire. More than 100 of his own compositions survive, among them instrumental works, Sufi hymns and lively dance tunes. And he was patron to many talented composers, including the most famous of all, Dede Efendi. But perhaps his greatest talent lay in rediscovering forgotten modes, or *makam*, and devising new ones, which his contemporaries worked up into finished pieces



THE GLORIES OF GLASS

▷ This cup for sweetmeats belonged to Selim's mother, Mihrişah Sultan. The crystal is Bohemian but the decoration, added in Istanbul, is strictly Ottoman. Circles of etched coloured glass have been applied to the surface, and the lid has a finial of diamonds, emeralds and rubies topped by a large baroque pearl. The Ottomans' growing dependence on glass from Venice and Bohemia led Selim to set up Turkey's first large glass factory with Venetian know-how. He located it near Paşabahçe, at the top of the Bosphorus, where the furnaces would not be a hazard. Istanbul was thenceforth able to make its own beautiful crystal

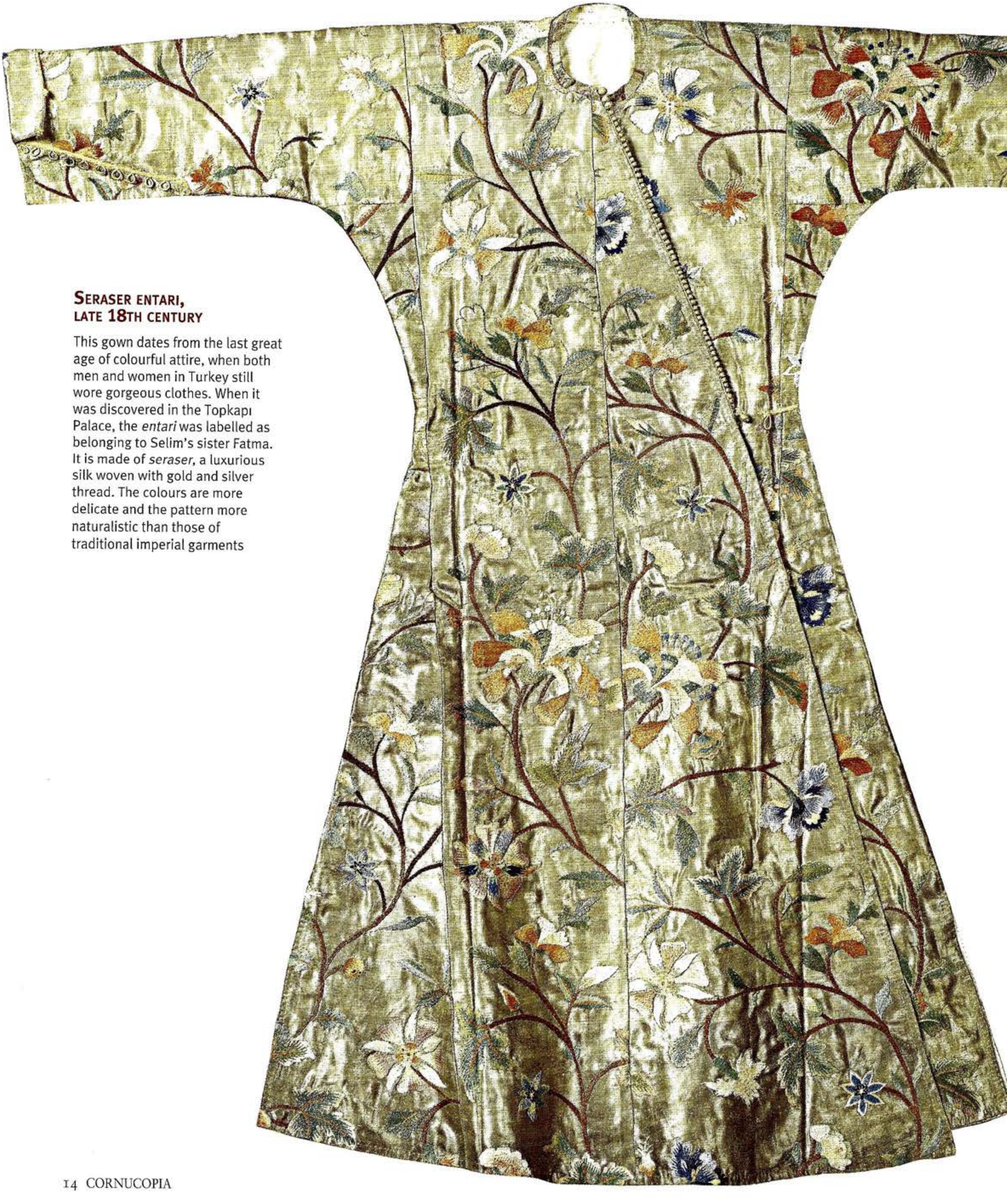


celebrated collection of the Sultan's poems, assembled and illuminated after his death, can be admired, although none of the poems is quoted in the exhibition's display boards. Under the pseudonym Ilhâmi he wrote such lines as:

O Ilhâmi, do not be indolent
and do not trust in the things of this world.
The world stops for no one and
its wheel turns without ceasing.

The exhibition does not put the Sultan in his geopolitical context; it does, however, show aspects of the sophisticated inner cultural life of the imperial palace. Hopefully it will inspire similar exhibitions on other Ottoman sultans. They need to be established as individuals with their own policies and characters, rather than merely names in a long dynastic list. ◆

Selim III, A Reformist, Poet and Musician is at the Topkapı Palace Museum until March 24. Sadly, the excellent catalogue is not for sale.

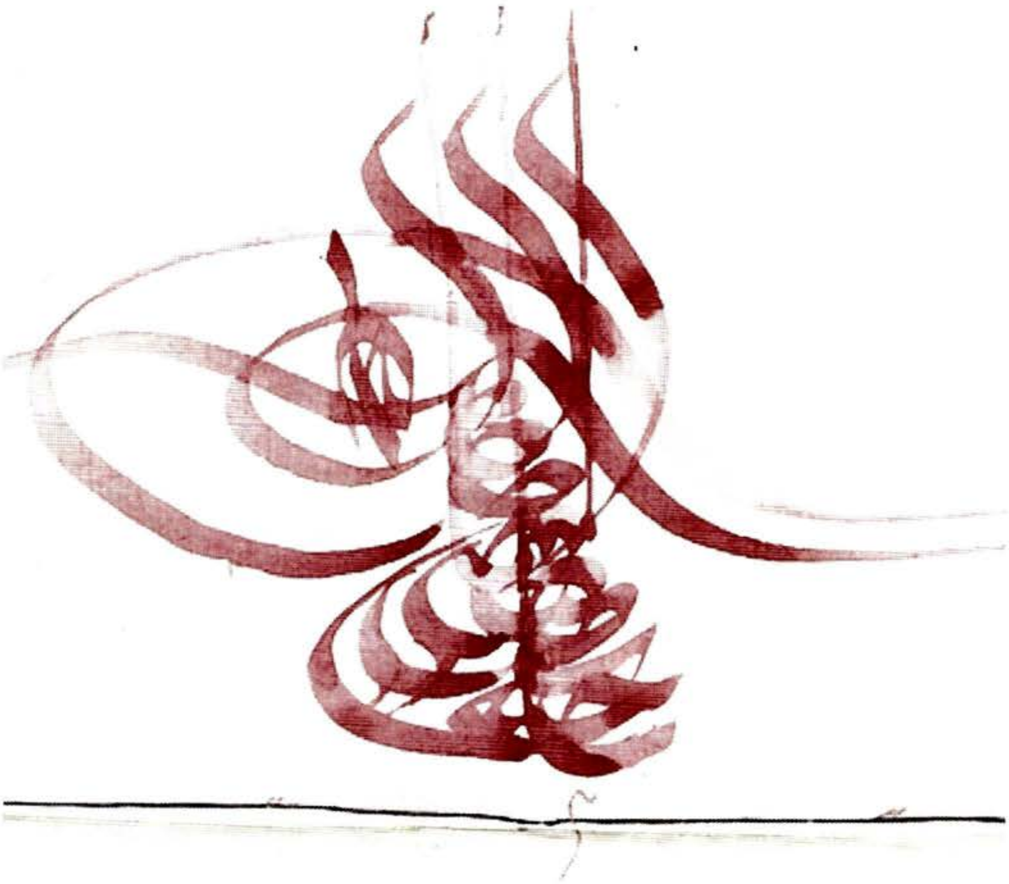


SERASER ENTARI, LATE 18TH CENTURY

This gown dates from the last great age of colourful attire, when both men and women in Turkey still wore gorgeous clothes. When it was discovered in the Topkapı Palace, the *entari* was labelled as belonging to Selim's sister Fatma. It is made of *seraser*, a luxurious silk woven with gold and silver thread. The colours are more delicate and the pattern more naturalistic than those of traditional imperial garments

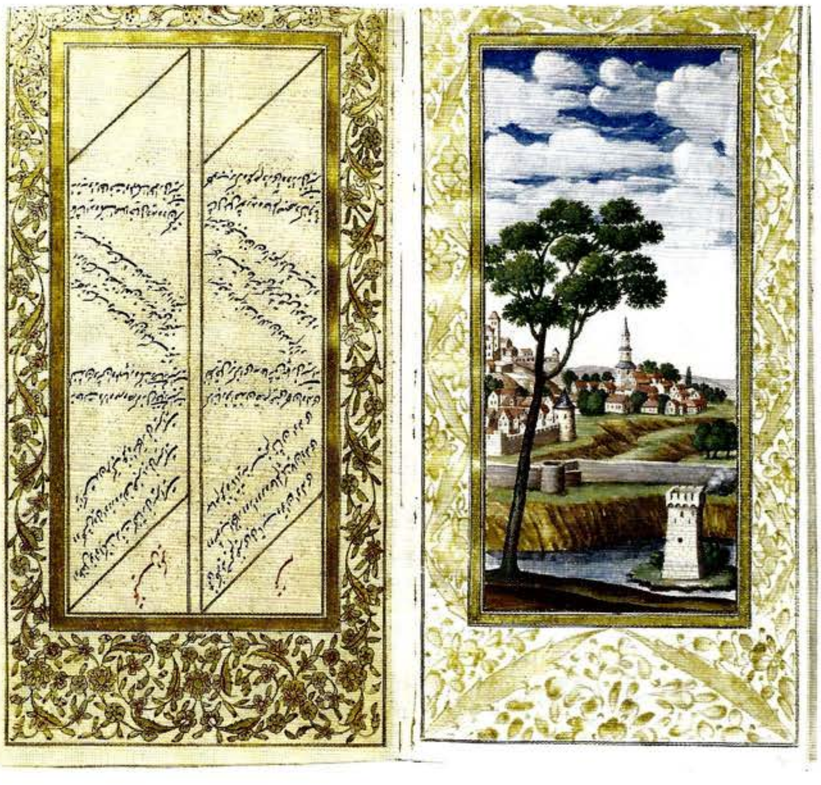
SYMBOLS OF THE SULTAN

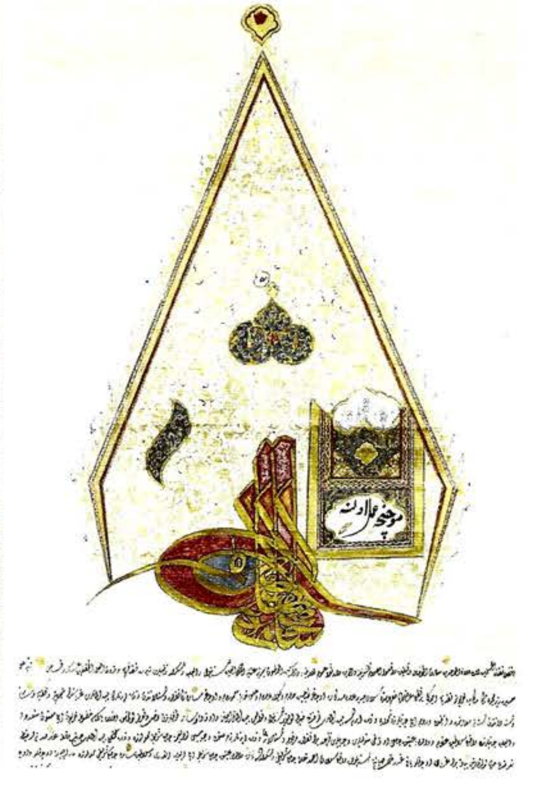
▷ *Tuğras* of Selim III. The sultan's stylised signature adorned every official document and building across the Empire. They could range in style from simple and flowing to embellished and ornate, but all were considered works of art. Selim's fluid red-ink *tuğra* on the right, from an 1806 *berat*, or letter of approval, confirms a new appointment to a charitable foundation. The *tuğra* below right belongs to a document that carries far greater weight, an 1807 firman, or decree, issued by the Imperial Divan at the Topkapı. Next to the *tuğra*, in Selim's hand, are the words *'Mucibince amel oluna'* (Act as required)

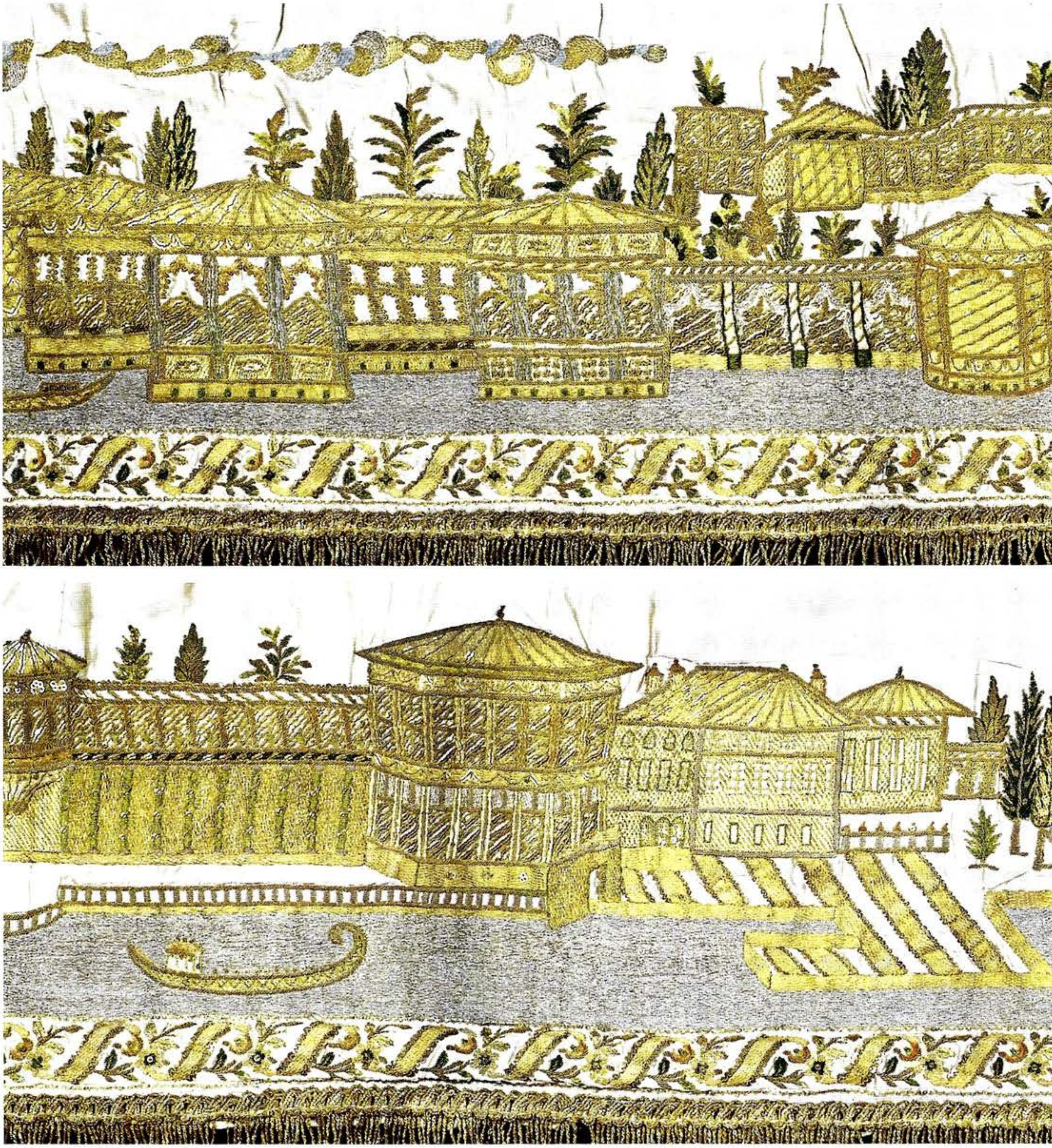


ALBUM OF SELIM III'S VERSE

▽ Selim wrote poetry under the name Ilhâmi (Inspired). The verses below, from the *Divan-ı Ilhâmi*, are illuminated with gold leaf and illustrated with landscapes by the painter Kapıdağlı Konstantin, which recall murals in the Topkapı Palace

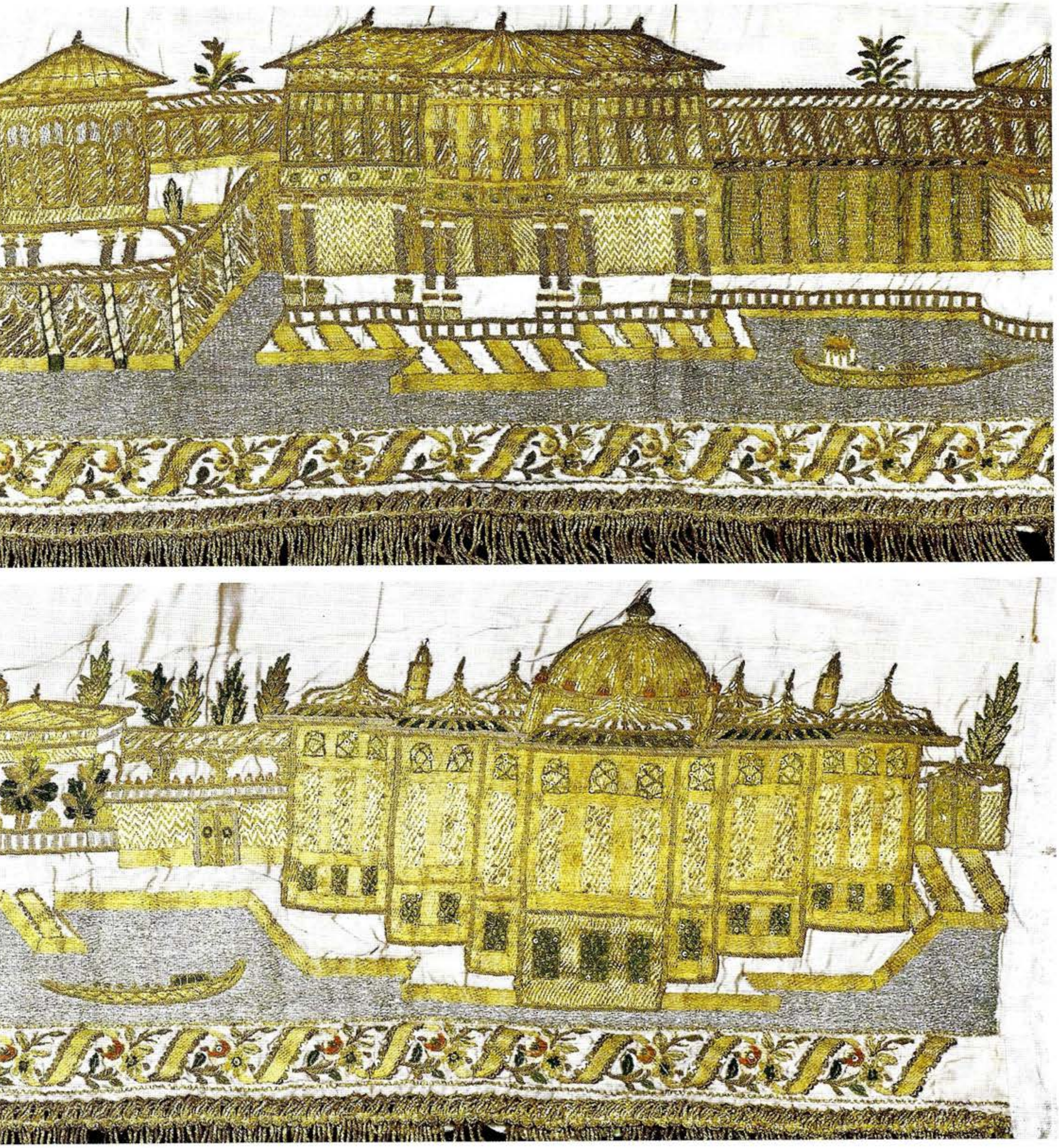






EMBROIDERY OF BEŞIKTAŞ PALACE, EARLY 19TH CENTURY

This glorious fabric – part of the skirting for a long *sedir*, or low divan – is not only one of the finest embroideries in the Topkapı's entire collection, it is also a unique record. It depicts in glittering gold thread the waterside palace at Beşiktaş – favourite residence of Selim III and his mother, Mihrişah – based on drawings by Antoine-Ignace Melling, a Lorraine-born architect who came to Istanbul in 1784 and stayed for 18 years. Melling worked for both Selim and his sister Hatice, helping her to redesign her palace in Ortaköy – their lively correspondence survives. Selim turned his palace into the apogee of classical Ottoman timber architecture. In 1854 the entire complex was pulled down to be replaced by the gleaming



white stone of the Dolmabahçe Palace, an essay in Western eclecticism and a world away. The two images here make up a third of the complete fabric, 4.3 metres in length and intended as skirting for the *sedir* that ran under the windows of the rooms seen here from the outside.

Philip Mansel is author of *Constantinople: City of the World's Desire* (pub. John Murray in English and Everest in Turkish) and *Sultans in Splendour: Monarchs of the Middle East 1869–1945* (Parkway), both available from cornucopia.net. He is working on a history of the Levant

Private view

Andrew Finkel looks forward to Istanbul's turn to show herself off to the world, laments the loss of Turgut Cansever and assesses the impact of global economic meltdown

Sailing back to Byzantium

There is a thriving academic literature examining world fairs of the 19th century to see how countries tried to represent themselves and the spirit of their age. And I imagine scholars are busily thumbing through catalogues of all the blockbuster exhibitions in the world's great museums that have attempted to sum up entire cultural legacies of countries and civilisations. CORNUCOPIA has itself risen to the bait in its comprehensive reviews of two Royal Academy exhibitions, *Turks: A Journey of a Thousand Years, 600–1600* and, more recently, *Byzantium 330–1453*, about to close its doors in Piccadilly.

The challenge of showing oneself off to best advantage will be embraced by the city of Istanbul when it mounts the podium to become European Capital of Culture in 2010. Preparations are intense, extensive and a little chaotic. Anyone visiting Istanbul will be impressed by the spidery scaffolding towers enveloping the minarets of many of the great imperial mosques. The effect is perplexing and extraordinary, out-Christoing Christo and turning the famous skyline into an Op Art mirage.

The great concern of those tracking the progress of 2010 is that the event should become more than the sum of its parts – that, like many of the famous world fairs of yesteryear, it should help define a generation, linking the great past of Istanbul to its future. So while it is right and proper that money be funnelled into restoring the buildings and monuments we know, there is an equally strong case for trying something new.

Istanbul is presented with just such an opportunity in the Yenikapı excavations, the huge construction site for the metro station that for the first time will link the Asian and European sides of the city by public transport. The emergency dig accompanying this project has proved to be possibly the most important urban archaeological site of our time. It has uncovered the harbour of Byzantium and revealed a flotilla of sunken merchant vessels which will rewrite the medieval history of the Mediterranean. If this were not enough, archaeologists have uncovered Bronze Age burials, which means the city is several millennia older than we knew.

The time is overdue for Istanbul to declare its historical peninsula an archaeological park on a par with that of Rome. This is a huge project which cannot be finished by 2010 but for which preparations – including the international contest for an open-air museum and a museum to house the Yenikapı finds – should begin. There are plans for one very modest nascent archaeological park in Turkey on the Asian side, in Küçükyalı, around the ninth-century Satyros Monastery. The green spaces around the site were recently saved from the developers' bulldozers by a determined publicity campaign, and the 2010 committee is considering adopting the project, which could become a prototype for historical reclamation elsewhere. It should not hesitate to do so.

Farewell to a great architect

TURGUT CANSEVER

born Antalya 1920, died Istanbul 2009

The Turkish architectural community is in mourning at the loss of one of its pantheon. The great Turgut Cansever passed away in February at the age of 89, and one can only hope that his influence lives on. He was as much philosopher as builder, urban planner as designer, which did not stop him from winning the Aga Khan award for three separate projects. The headquarters of the Turkish History Society, which won the prize in 1980, is perhaps the most forceful of his buildings, a work that was post-modern before its time, and demonstrated a genuine dialogue with the past which the official historians who occupy the building have not always succeeded in emulating. Cansever's respect for traditional methods was a rebuke to the neo-brutalists who posited a glass-box skyline for Istanbul and whose concrete bunkers posing as holiday homes for the new bourgeoisie defiled the coastline. The two other Aga Khan prizes in which he had a share were for the transformation of a ruined mansion in Bodrum into a summer retreat for Ahmet Ertegün of Atlantic Records (1977), and the charming village of Demirköy (1992), with its deceptively simple stone houses built in the local vernacular, in an ancient olive grove, also near Bodrum.

Like his mentor, the great Sedad Hakkı Eldem, Turgut Cansever unwittingly encouraged far less capable successors, who, with their Ottoman Disneyworld eaves and disproportionate cantilevered rooms, were in a monologue with the past best ignored. Turgut Cansever set out to discover what was truly modern in traditional architecture and oblige that architecture to grow up. There was also a modesty and sense of social responsibility in the scale. "Art is within the realm of ethics," he wrote. Though modest is not a word one associates with Cansever, he had the confidence not to want the architecture to show off. Respect for the past did not mean a need to indulge in the monumental. "Anonymity is not easy, and not many architects can do it well," as Eldem once said.

Rediscovering Europe

If only I could make my way into cyberspace to tear up a piece I wrote some time ago, explaining just how exciting it was that in the improved mid-2000 economic climate Turks would be able to take out mortgages and plan ahead for the long term. Of course, we now know that if the Turkish economy manages to crawl out of the global crisis alive, then it is precisely because Turkish consumers are comparatively under-leveraged.

It is glib and extremely useful journalistic shorthand to speak of crises as opportunities. Crises, more than opportunities, are chances to enact dramatic changes in a game plan and to bury conventional wisdom. Turkey's relatively strong position now is the result of the overhaul of its banking system during the self-inflicted crisis of 2001. It had been trying to go the extra mile, to bring down inflation by keeping interest rates high and the currency strong. But in today's meltdown world this is a strategy it has been able to jettison. Like the rest of the world, Turkey has been lowering interest rates to keep the economy relatively buoyant; the result has been the falling value of the lira. Unlike in the old days, however, this has not resulted in higher inflation. The crisis has seen to that.

One strategy Ankara should not abandon is its commitment to Europe. It was the prospect of EU membership that helped Turkey throw off the crisis in 2001. The accession process was a guarantee to the outside world that Turkey had a clear sense of direction. There is a Turkish expression describing how to avoid wasting effort in repeating what has already been done: "No need to rediscover America," the saying goes. But by all means it should rediscover Europe. ◆

BACK ISSUES FROM CORNUCOPIA ONLINE

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The balustrade designed by D'Aronco in the hallway of the Chalet Kiosk at Yıldız Palace, photographed by Fritz von der Schulenburg

CORNUCOPIA 22, Vol 4, 2001
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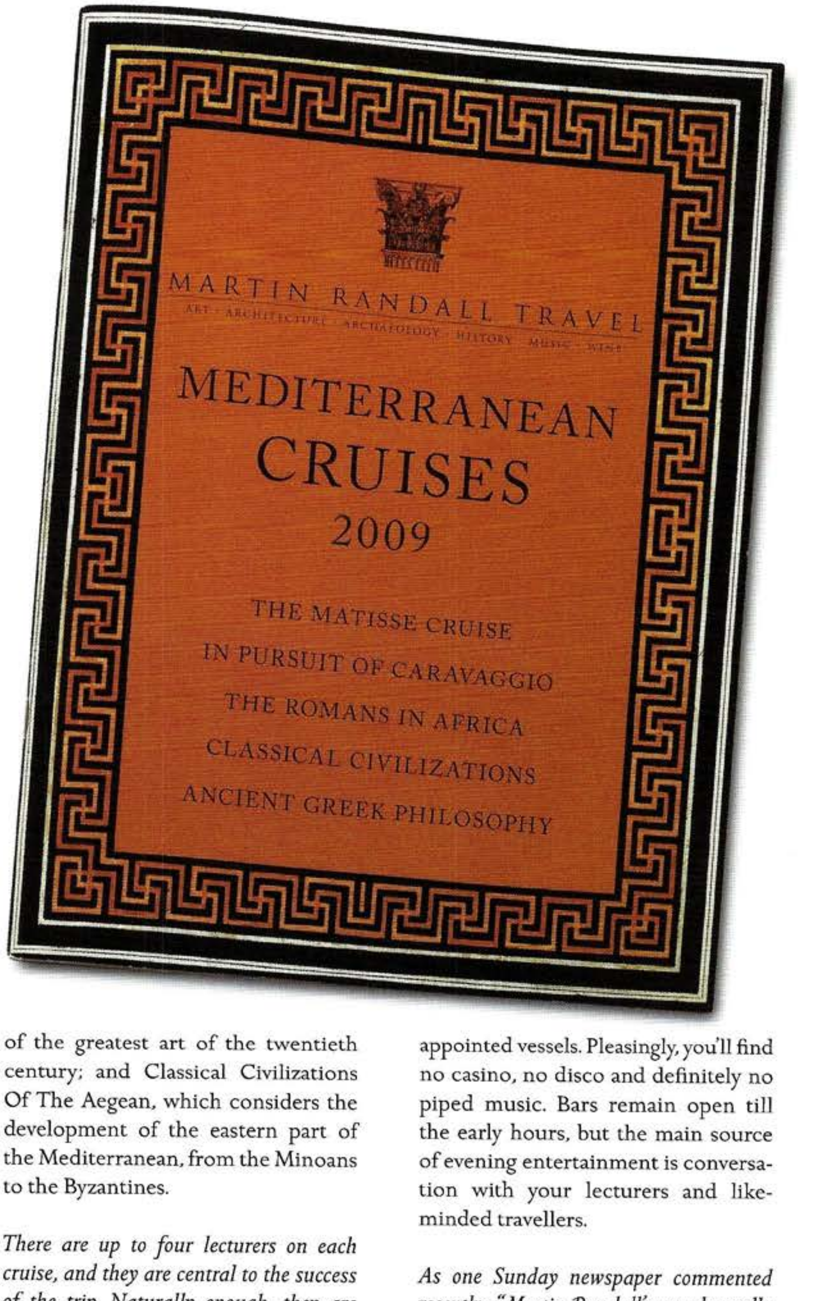

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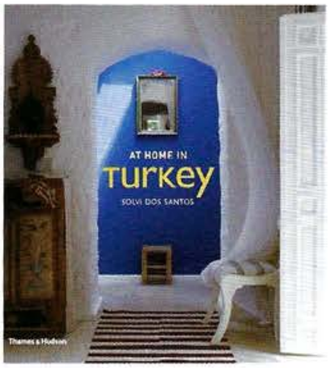


Above: Abdülhamid II being cheered by his people at the end of the first week in August 1908 for reinstating the Constitution

TURBULENT TIMES

David Barchard

100th Anniversary of the Restoration of the Constitution

Sadberk Hanım Museum, TL80

Apart from an exhibition at the Sadberk Hanım Museum in Istanbul last summer, with its impressive catalogue, and a seminar in Ankara, the centenary of the 1908 revolution in Turkey went almost unnoticed. Until the 1930s things were very different. July 24, the date of Abdülhamid II's restoration of the 1876 constitution, ending more than three decades of personal rule, was an annual public holiday, known as the Freedom Bayram.

However, the absence of celebrations today is no mystery. The revolution was a turning point in Turkish history which, far from achieving its aim of preventing partition of the Ottoman Empire, opened the way for a series of ever more terrible disasters, starting with the Balkan War of 1912, in which Turkey lost most of its European possessions, and culminating in defeat in the First World War.

This decade of catastrophes cost over 2.3 million Muslim lives in Anatolia alone. And Turkey did not regain the level of material prosperity it had enjoyed before the war until perhaps the late 1950s.

Had Atatürk not led his country to victory in the War of

Independence (1919–1923), Turkey would have survived only as an inland rump state in central Anatolia.

Nevertheless the Young Turk revolution of 1908–09 was one of the most momentous turnarounds in pre-First World War European history. Without it Turkey would not be the country it is today. After 600 years the very idea of absolute monarchy disappeared from the Turkish political landscape. Nationalism, parliamentary rule and popular sovereignty put down permanent roots. Though they were, ultimately, failures (villains in the eyes of the rest of the world) the Young Turk leaders, Enver, Talât, Cemal and Cavit, came from nowhere but were, by any standards, outstanding politicians.

Like most great revolutions, the events of 1908 took everyone – including probably the revolutionaries – by surprise. It was a difficult year – the time of the biggest recession in world markets until the 1930s. In Turkey violence in Macedonia in the summer months ran at around 200 deaths a month in cross-cutting conflicts between Greeks and Bulgarians as well as Muslims. Britain and Russia showed signs of wanting to intervene – something likely to trigger the break-up of the empire's remaining Balkan territories. The creaking absolutist system of Abdülhamid appeared unable to respond effectively to the danger, designed more to suppress internal dissent than to defend the Ottoman lands.

In previous decades several groups of opponents to the Sultan had set up organisations in exile in Europe and Egypt with the aim of restoring constitutional rule. They attracted a good deal of press coverage, though European governments paid them no heed. It was not, however, the well-known exiles who overthrew Abdülhamid, but officers in the Ottoman Third Army in the frontline towns of Manastır and Selanik (Saloniki). These coup-makers were in a sense Abdülhamid's children, products of the schools and training he had created to form the Ottoman army and civil service.

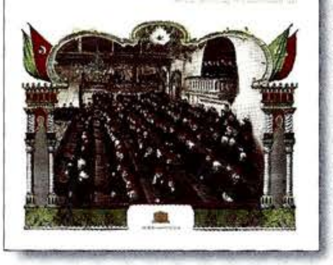
At the beginning of July 1908, army officers in Manastır took to the hills, led by Resneli Niyazi Bey and a Major Enver Bey. A few days later the Marseillaise, hymn to liberty and revolution, began to be played in the barracks. The plotters apparently hoped to bring down the Sultan by the end of August, the anniversary of his accession. The British Consul in Manastır was quietly warned on July 13 that a revolution was about to take place. Although a general sent by the Sultan to restore order had been murdered five days before, this seemed quite unlikely. But events moved with unexpected rapidity.

Just 10 days later, on the night of the 23rd, after a long meeting with his ministers in the Yıldız Palace in Istanbul, the Sultan recognised that the basis of his rule had crumbled and that he could no longer count on the loyalty of his armies, and he proclaimed the restoration of the constitution. Support for the Young Turk conspirators in Manastır had spread rapidly among civilians in the capital and among some, though not yet all, of the armed forces elsewhere – an indication that this small group was effectively eclipsing the exiled politicians to whom the name Young Turks had until now been attached.

The sultan's unpopular ministers and the leaders of his spy networks were dismissed, and in one case lynched, after fleeing across the Bosphorus. As Abdülhamid's police state collapsed, ordinary people flocked into the streets of Constantinople and other cities, embracing each other with a joy which at least temporarily transcended distinctions of religion, race or language. For the first time in 30 years it was possible to talk about politics and international affairs. Commemorative plates and shields were created, celebrating the constitution and the restoration of the Westernising reformist tradition in Turkey which had begun in the 1840s with the Tanzimat.

British influence temporarily eclipsed that of Germany in Turkey and processions gathered at the British Embassy gates "to do honour" to Britain for its supposed support for the revolution. Sir Gerald Lowther, the new ambassador, was greeted by enthusiastic demonstrators. But the revolution had taken the British by surprise. They hankered a little for Abdülhamid's personal rule, and the embassy turned out to be a poor ally.

Who would take over the government? The Sultan's first choice was Sait Pasha, 78, regarded as pro-British and therefore pro-democratic, but he lasted just two weeks, for he was unacceptable to the revolutionaries. Behind the scenes the Young Turks were beginning to direct events. Their choice for head of the government was the more definitely Anglophile and liberal Kâmil Pasha, 76, who had been much less close to the Sultan and his despotism. Kâmil held the post for six months, until his dismissal in mid-February 1909.



'THE CARNIVAL-LIKE ATMOSPHERE IN DECEMBER, WHEN THE NEW NATIONAL ASSEMBLY OPENED, WAS QUICKLY FOLLOWED BY POLITICAL SIEGE WARFARE'

The Sultan and the Young Turk revolutionaries now shared power. Abdülhamid proclaimed that he had always been a constitutionalist at heart. For the first time ever in Turkish history, a form of politics based on the people rather than the Sultan started to get under way. A new National Assembly, successor to the one that had shut down in 1877, had to be elected. The election process started in November but, as in other Ottoman elections, an indirect system of voting was used, and it was not until December 17 that it was eventually able to meet.

Two parties competed in the elections and the Assembly that emerged from it. The first was the Young Turks themselves, now organised with like-minded returning exiles, who campaigned as the Committee for Union and Progress. They represented, generally speaking, younger junior officials and the middle classes, who were seeking radical centralising modernisation and an end to foreign economic control in the empire. From mid-September they were opposed by a rival to their right, the Liberal Union, of which the grand vizier, Kâmil Pasha, soon became a member. One of their key figures was a journalist, Ali Kemal, an eloquent liberal-conservative writer in the anti-Committee for Union and Progress newspaper, *Ikdam*, who quickly became a national, indeed international, figure. He had served several years in exile in Syria under Abdülhamid, had travelled in Europe and had an English wife, and favoured what we would now call multiculturalism. One of his descendants is, famously, the present mayor of London, Boris Johnson. Ali Kemal himself, for all his talents, could never win an election, and the Liberal Union itself was not much more popular. In the 1908 elections it won not one parliamentary seat in the capital, even though it presided over the government.

This weakness was at first disguised by the fact that Kâmil Pasha headed the government, while the Young Turks were largely in the shadows, not initially trying to hold the reins of power themselves. So their Liberal Union opponents overestimated their own strength. The carnival-like atmosphere in December, when the new National Assembly opened, was quickly followed by political siege warfare. On January 26 *The Times* reported a self-confident "Banquet of Ottoman Liberals", at which Kâmil, Ali Kemal and İsmail Kemal Bey, a veteran Ottoman liberal and former disciple of Mithat Pasha, now an advocate of Albanian rights and greater decentralisation, toasted each other with speeches marking the anniversary of the foundation of the Ottoman Empire. But they must have had some sense of their own insecurity. The previous day the Ottoman liberals had decisively thrown out a parliamentary bill to introduce direct elections and universal suffrage in future elections.

Storm clouds were gathering at home and abroad. On October 11 the previous autumn, just two months after the revolution, Bulgaria had declared its full independence, casting off Ottoman suzerainty, and the same day Austria-Hungary announced the annexation of Bosnia Herzegovina. Other countries were now sizing up Turkish military strength to see if the empire's remaining possessions, including the capital itself, might be grabbed.

In early February Kâmil Pasha inadvertently triggered his own downfall. The Young Turks seem to have been happy with him as long as he respected the power-sharing deal that brought him to power. But when he attempted to force out of office the two Committee for Union and Progress ministers in the cabinet controlling the army and the navy, he was clearly trying to eliminate the Young Turks. The pasha had triumphed in a vote of confidence a month earlier and supposed that he would do so again.

Even Abdülhamid saw the move as a naked play for power. "I know Kâmil Pasha. This man wants to become dictator," he commented as he signed his approval as a dutiful constitutional monarch.

A leading Young Turk, Talât Bey, future grand vizier of the First World War and vice-president of the Assembly, moved a motion of no confidence. Kâmil refused to appear before the house and the motion was passed by 198 votes to eight. Hüseyin Hilmi Pasha, a senior general close to the Young Turks and the outgoing Minister of the Interior, took over as head of the new government – the first-ever grand vizier to owe his position to parliament.

The new administration lasted only a turbulent month and a half. There were military mutinies in Yanina and Yıldız Palace. The Sultan's guard was purged of its Kurdish, Laz and Albanian men. There were demonstrations around mosques, ostensibly over the persecution of Muslims in Bulgaria, and a campaign for sharia law. At the start of April, Islamists set up a party, the Ittihad-ı Muhammedî, or Mohammedan Union. Meanwhile, the liberal press was engaged in an onslaught against the Young Turks. Hasan Fehmi Bey, editor of a leading liberal paper, became the first of several Turkish journalists killed before the First World War.

An unofficial medallion struck in July–August 1908 to commemorate the proclamation of the Constitution

As in other revolutions, a brutal test of strength had to follow. Before dawn on April 13, 1909 – March 31 in the old calendar, still officially used – there was a full-scale military mutiny in the capital. Serving men seized and bound their officers, then marched 20,000-strong on Ayasofya Square and proclaimed the sharia. The Sultan quickly announced his acceptance. In the power vacuum anti-Young-Turk liberals quickly struck deals with him.

Turkey seemed poised to go down an Islamist path. The Young Turks, fearing for their lives, vanished into hiding. The new middle classes trembled. Only Istanbul's foreigners, protected by their privileges, were safe. Mahmud Muhtar Pasha, commander of the First Army, fled to safety in the Moda home of the Whittall family. A mob chased him to their door, only to be repelled by Mrs Whittall, wielding her umbrella. Nearer by, around Taksim Square, foreign residents such as Woods Pasha, an English naval officer in Ottoman service, watched the street violence from the rooftops of their homes. In Adana and Mersin supporters of the mutiny killed local Armenians.

The British Embassy's official line tilted towards the Islamic counter-revolutionaries, almost certainly on the advice of Gerald Fitzmaurice, its chief dragoman, who detested the Young Turks and was widely suspected of having a hand in the uprising. To support Ismail Kemal, temporarily head of the Assembly, Lowther issued an unwise statement saying that the constitution was still functioning.

If the Ambassador intended to stop military intervention, he failed. Within 10 days the Third Army, under the stern leadership of General Mustafa Şevket Pasha, arrived from Selanik and easily regained control of the city. His chief of staff was an officer in his early thirties named Mustafa Kemal, the future founder of the Turkish Republic.

Eighty ringleaders of the revolt were hanged in the streets. Abdülhamid was deposed to finish his days in exile and his more intimate retainers hustled out of the place. "Eunuchs and wretched women from the Imperial harem who had never been in the streets before in their lives came along into the town in hundreds, and bands of captive soldiers were driven along with them," recalled Sir Thomas Hohler. What became of them? Well, one of the ladies in the Sultan's harem was a Circassian girl with the palace name Neşesaçan. She married a middle-ranking official, but died young of tuberculosis in 1923, though not before she had made a clear and perhaps typical transition from Palace lady to modern middle-class wife.

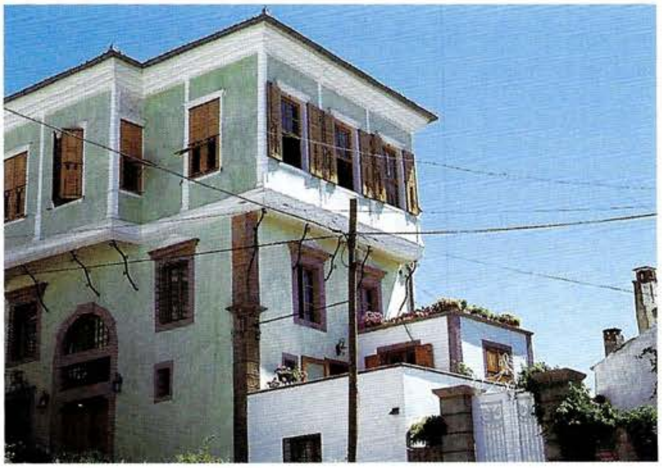
Hüseyin Hilmi Pasha returned as grand vizier but with Mahmut Şevket Pasha as a powerful martial-law commander in Istanbul. The Committee for Union and Progress moved closer to the centre of power. A relatively peaceful phase opened: there were two years to go before an attack by Italy plunged Turkey into the first of the terminal wars of Ottoman history.

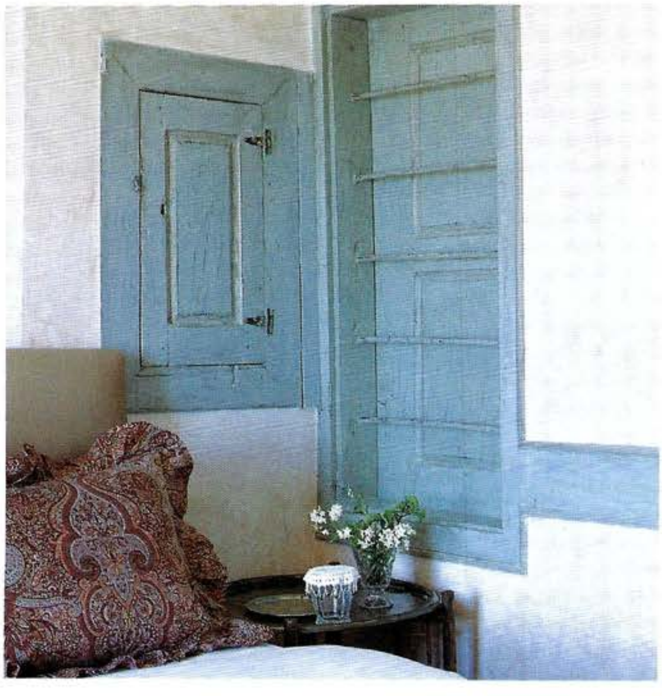
The Young Turks themselves were riding high in international esteem, as was shown on the first anniversary of the revolution. On July 22, 1909 a delegation headed by Talât Pasha was received in London by King Edward VII and entertained to lunch at the House of Commons by the prime minister, Mr Asquith. As he raised his glass to toast friendship between Britain and Turkey, Talât – who 12 months earlier had been a recently dismissed post-office official in Selanik, working in an illegal organisation – must have reflected on the extraordinary changes that a year can bring. ◆

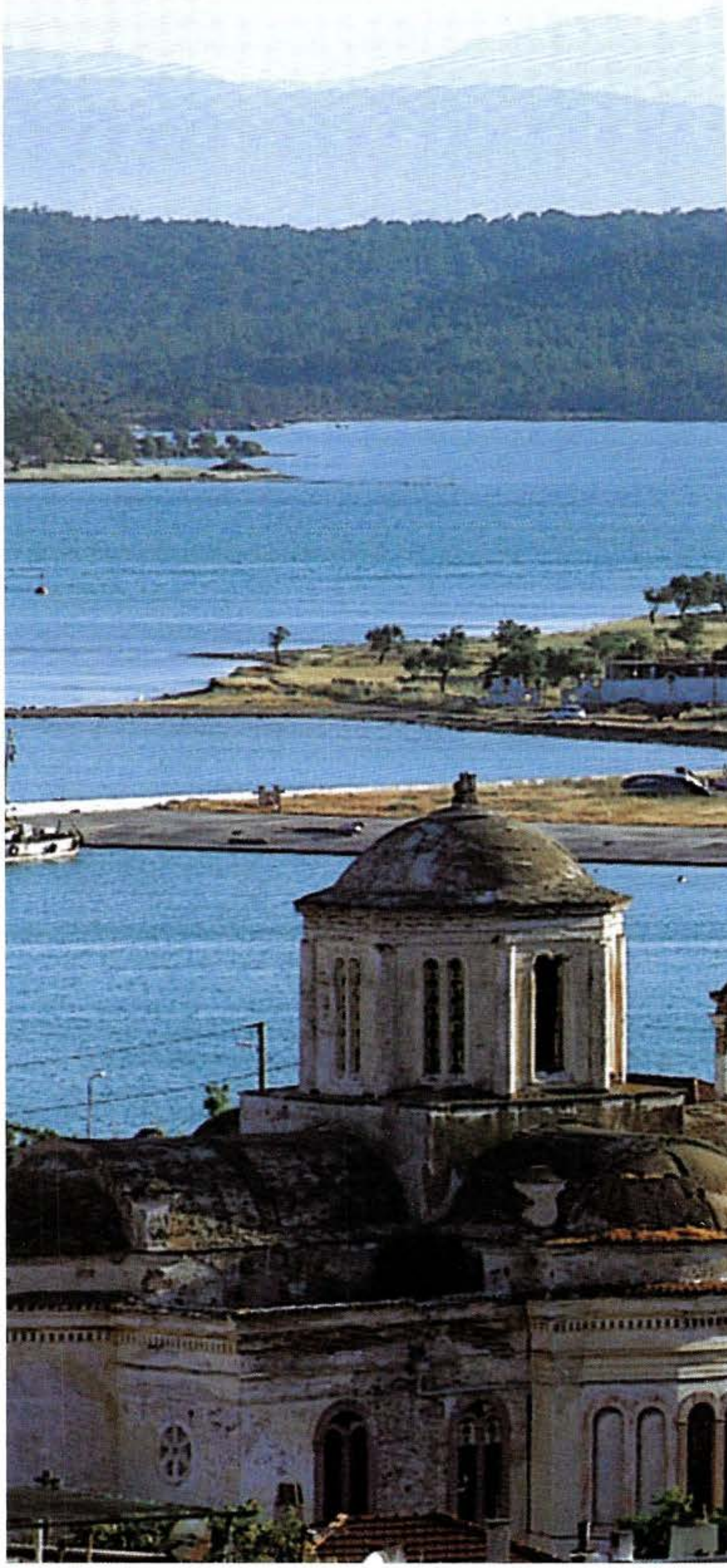
- *The catalogue of the Sadberk Hanım Museum's exhibition, published in June 2008 in English and Turkish, contains pictures, photographs, documents and memorabilia of the 1908–1909 revolution. Edited by Bahattin Öztuncay, with an introduction by Ömer M Koç, the book contains articles by Sinan Kuneralp, Paul Bessemer, Sacit Kutlu, David Barchard and Edhem Eldem on aspects of the period, including the early life of Enver Pasha, Ottoman Jews and Ottoman Greeks. Richly illustrated, the book can be obtained from cornucopia.net*

AN ANTIQUARIAN'S DELICIOUSLY DISTRESSED HOUSE IN THE AEGEAN WAS THE FIRST PORT OF CALL FOR BERRIN TOROLSAN WHEN SHE SET OUT TO WRITE THE TEXT FOR AN INSPIRING NEW BOOK ON TURKISH INTERIORS. IN THIS EXTRACT FROM 'AT HOME IN TURKEY', WITH PHOTOGRAPHS BY SOLVI DOS SANTOS, SHE IS CAPTIVATED BY A LOW-KEY RESTORATION

THE POETRY WITHIN



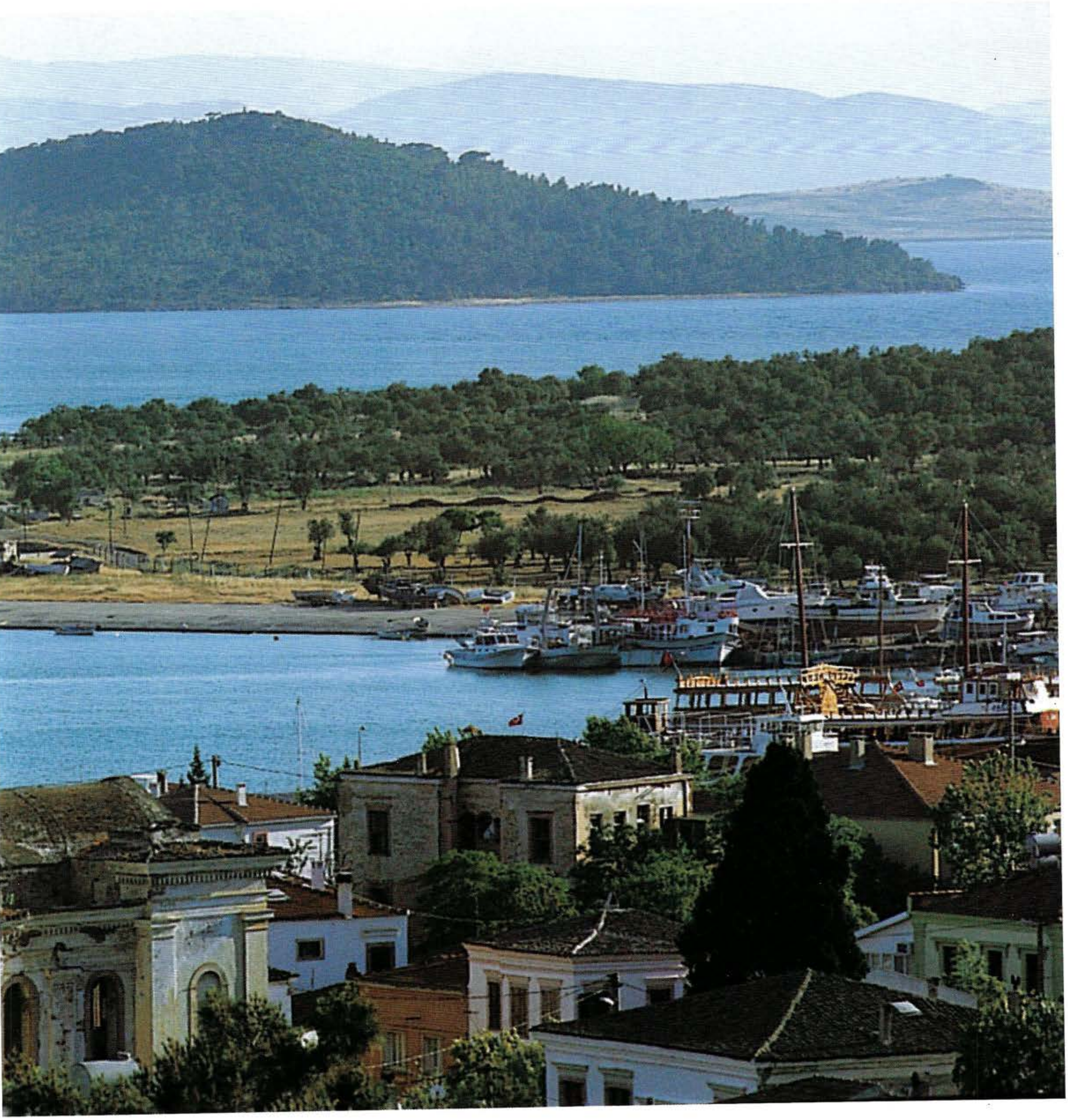




TOP LEFT: THE PRIEST'S HOUSE FAITHFULLY RESTORED BY SELDEN EMRE. THE DATE 1809 IS CARVED ON THE KEYSTONE OF THE ARCH ABOVE THE FRONT DOOR.

LEFT: JASMINE FROM THE GARDEN IN A GUEST BEDROOM. INTERIOR DETAILS, LIKE THIS BUILT-IN CUPBOARD AND SHUTTERED WINDOW, HAVE ALL BEEN RETURNED TO THE ORIGINAL.

ABOVE: THE BAY OF AYVALIK, WITH THE ISLAND OF LESBOS IN THE DISTANCE. ALL THE MAIN WINDOWS HAVE VIEWS OF THE AEGEAN



Selden Emre's grand house on the island of Cunda, which once belonged to a Christian priest, dates back to the beginning of the 19th century. In its day it was one of the town's most prestigious houses, located on the hill next to the basilica on a corner known as Merdibanli Sokak – the street with steps.

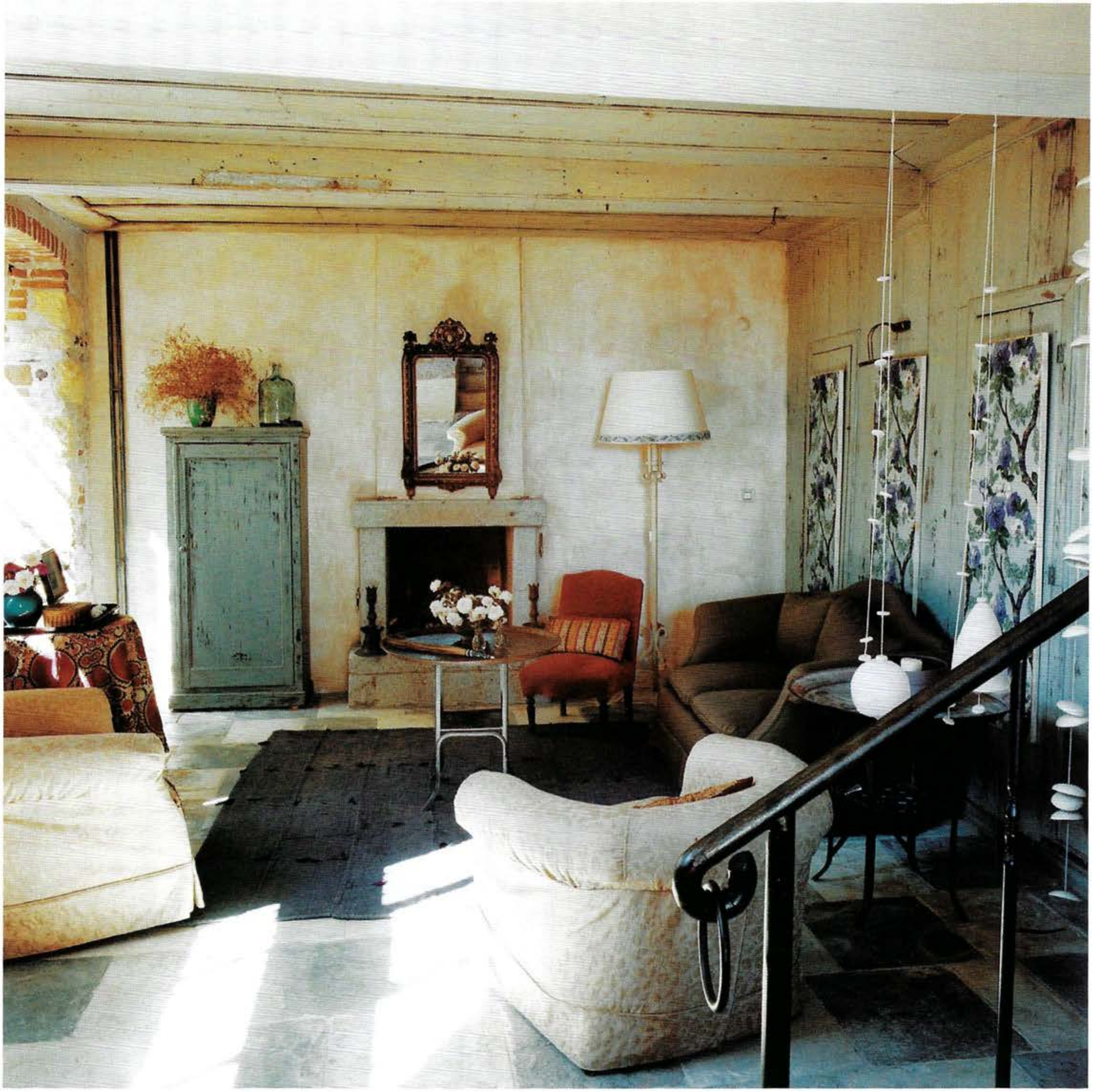
Cunda, off the coast of Ayvalık in the northwestern Aegean, is a small island attached to the mainland by a causeway. The largest of twenty or so islands in an archipelago that forms a lace-like pattern on the Aegean coastline, Cunda is the only one that is inhabited. With its magnificent views and scented breezes blowing down from Mount Ida, it has always been a popular retreat. The island's architecture suffered in troubled times: the riots and civil wars of the final days of the Ottoman Empire were followed by a massive earthquake in 1944. But elegant 19th-century Neoclassical features are still visible everywhere.

Selden is a brilliant antiquarian with a keen eye for

exquisite objects. Her three-storey house dominates its neighbours but is not ostentatious. It has been beautifully and faithfully restored to its former grandeur, yet in no way is it at odds with the other old houses in the neighbourhood, all of which are listed, and no fewer than 551 of which are under conservation by the state. The pale pistachio green of the exterior paintwork marries happily with the wooden shutters, the white detailing, the exposed stonework of the arched doorway.

Old architectural features, which often also prove to be clever practical solutions, are still in use. For example, rainwater is collected from the roof and channelled through zinc gutters and pipes into the cistern in the basement. Nowadays there is a city water supply, and if there are any

ABOVE: THE EXISTING WOODEN CUPBOARDS INGENIOUSLY SCREEN AN EN-SUITE BATHROOM. OPPOSITE: LIGHT POURS INTO THE HALL, WITH ITS CHEQUERED FLAGGING, WHICH SERVES AS A SPACIOUS LIVING ROOM. RIGHT: WHEN THE MASONRY IN THE ORIGINAL KITCHEN WAS BEING RESTORED, TINY NICHES EMERGED



water shortages one can order a tanker. But, as Selden says, "Why not use a perfect ecological system that already exists?" As a result, all year round she enjoys the softest of water. "Rainwater is free, and it makes your hair silky, the laundry soft and your plants happy." All she did was install a small pump to bring water to the upstairs bathrooms. During the entire restoration concrete and synthetic materials were avoided. The thick stone walls, often lime-plastered and limewashed, and the wooden ceilings and floorboards all help to keep the house cool in the summer months, making air conditioning unnecessary.

An elegant arched doorway with massive oak doors opens into a spacious hall with chequered black-and-white flagging salvaged from another old building, the frosty patina of age adding to the general atmosphere. A palette of dove greys, sage greens, faded mauves and soft creams is enlivened by a vivid velvet nursing chair next to the fireplace. On the garden side of the hall is a raised platform, under which stands the cistern, filled to the brim with rainwater. On this platform, where the kitchen was originally located, is a second well-used fireplace with its original hearth, a sofa and a dining-cum-working table, all offering inviting corners to rest, work or just contemplate. Selden's three cats also seem to be most at home here. Beyond is a very small, bright kitchen with a charming balcony, a later addition, where breakfast can be taken. From the platform one also has access to a little veranda, where most summer afternoons are spent and from which stairs lead down to a delightful walled

garden, lovingly lined with pots and containers of sweet basil, old-fashioned roses, fragrant lemon geraniums, jasmine and clove-scented pinks.

A wrought-iron staircase with wooden steps – one of the few modern features of the house – takes one up to two rooms on the first floor, separated by a landing. The ceilings are lower here, as these were originally the winter rooms traditional in all Ottoman houses; sandwiched between two floors, they were warmer and easier to heat in winter. The shutters in these rooms are inside, so that they can be easily closed on stormy evenings. Selden has converted them into delightful guest bedrooms. All the cupboards, shelves

THIS PAGE: THE BOUDOIR, WHICH SERVES AS AN EXTRA BEDROOM FOR FRIENDS (TOP LEFT); THE LANDING ON THE FIRST FLOOR (TOP RIGHT) – THE COLOUR OF THE SILK BROCADE KAFTAN MATCHES THE SAGE GREEN PAINT OF THE WOODWORK; THE TOP-FLOOR LANDING (ABOVE LEFT) LEADING TO THE MASTER BEDROOM; THE EXISTING WOODEN CUPBOARDS WITH THEIR NICHES (ABOVE RIGHT) ARE PAINTED WITH NATURAL PIGMENTS.

OPPOSITE: SELDEN'S BATHROOM, WHICH HAS BREATHTAKING VIEWS OF THE ARCHIPELAGO

and niches have been preserved, offering not only generous storage, but also handsome partitions, even concealing a bathroom in one of the rooms. All the timber elements are painted a distressed sage green.

The lath-and-plaster second floor overhangs the street, jutting out over the strong stone walls of the two lower floors and resting on delicate iron consoles. The rooms on this floor have magnificent views from every window, even the bathrooms. Selden reserved the two larger adjoining rooms as her bedroom and boudoir. The latter has a vaulted ceiling with plaster cornices and was presumably once the main reception room of the house. The ceiling has traces of painted decoration, and the walls are inlaid with small wooden plaques which would have enabled the owners to hang curtain rails above the windows and numerous heavy-framed paintings around the room without damaging the plasterwork.

Selden has a fine touch: the colours, furniture and objects she has chosen all have a poetic, uncontrived feel. The restoration may have taken two years to complete, but it looks as if it was effortlessly achieved. ◆

- *At Home in Turkey* (photographs by Solvi dos Santos, text by Berrin Torolsan), Thames & Hudson, £24.95, is available from cornucopia.net at the subscriber's price of £22.95 inc p&p

AMBLER'S ISTANBUL

Norman Stone

JOURNEY INTO FEAR

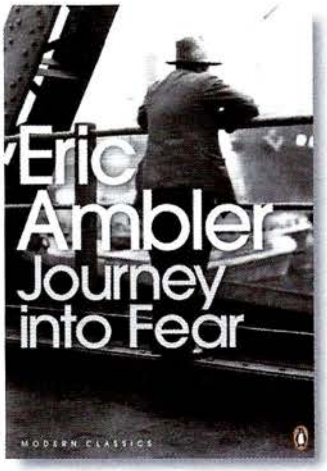
By Eric Ambler
Penguin Modern Classics, £8.99

When I was a small boy in the later 1940s, Eric Ambler was a considerable presence at home. My mother, born in the same year as Ambler (1909), was always talking about him with relatives and friends. He was one of those authors who were both improving in the literary sense and extremely readable: you wanted to know what happened next, and his first six thrillers, written in the 1930s, had a runaway success. There is an odd parallel here with Graham Greene, also a writer of sophisticated political thrillers. But then Ambler rather passed out of view. So it is splendid that Penguin are now re-issuing five of his books.

The product of a world where the thriller had got under way, he is halfway between Buchan and Bond, and the difference is the cinema. In the 19th century, the book was the epicentre of entertainment. Then came cinema. Books had to compete, and it is maybe the case that the best thrillers are semi-consciously written as film scripts: you have to move fast. Greene's novels made for classic films such as *The Third Man*, but Ambler was more directly involved in the cinema, and crafted his books in terms of their filmability. In 1938 he worked as script consultant with Alexander Korda, and during the war became assistant director of military cinematography, responsible for over 100 training and propaganda films. After the war he eventually migrated to Hollywood, where he produced or was associated with some classic winners, especially *The Cruel Sea* and *Topkapi*, which attracted the outstanding actors and directors of the age: James Mason, Joseph Cotten, Alec Guinness, Peter Ustinov, Glenys Johns, Gregory Peck.

Though, like Greene, he escaped British taxes and lived in the USA or Switzerland for most of his later life, Ambler was very English of a certain era. His parents had been "entertainers" and Ambler himself toured in the late '20s as a music-hall comedian; he wrote plays. From 1924 to 1927 he studied engineering and took up an apprenticeship at the Edison Swan Electric Company. Later he moved to Paris and wrote, from 1936 to 1940, six classics: *The Dark Frontier* (1936), *Uncommon Danger* (1937), *Epitaph for a Spy* (1938), *Cause for Alarm*, *A Coffin for Dimitrios* (1939), and *Journey into Fear* (1940).

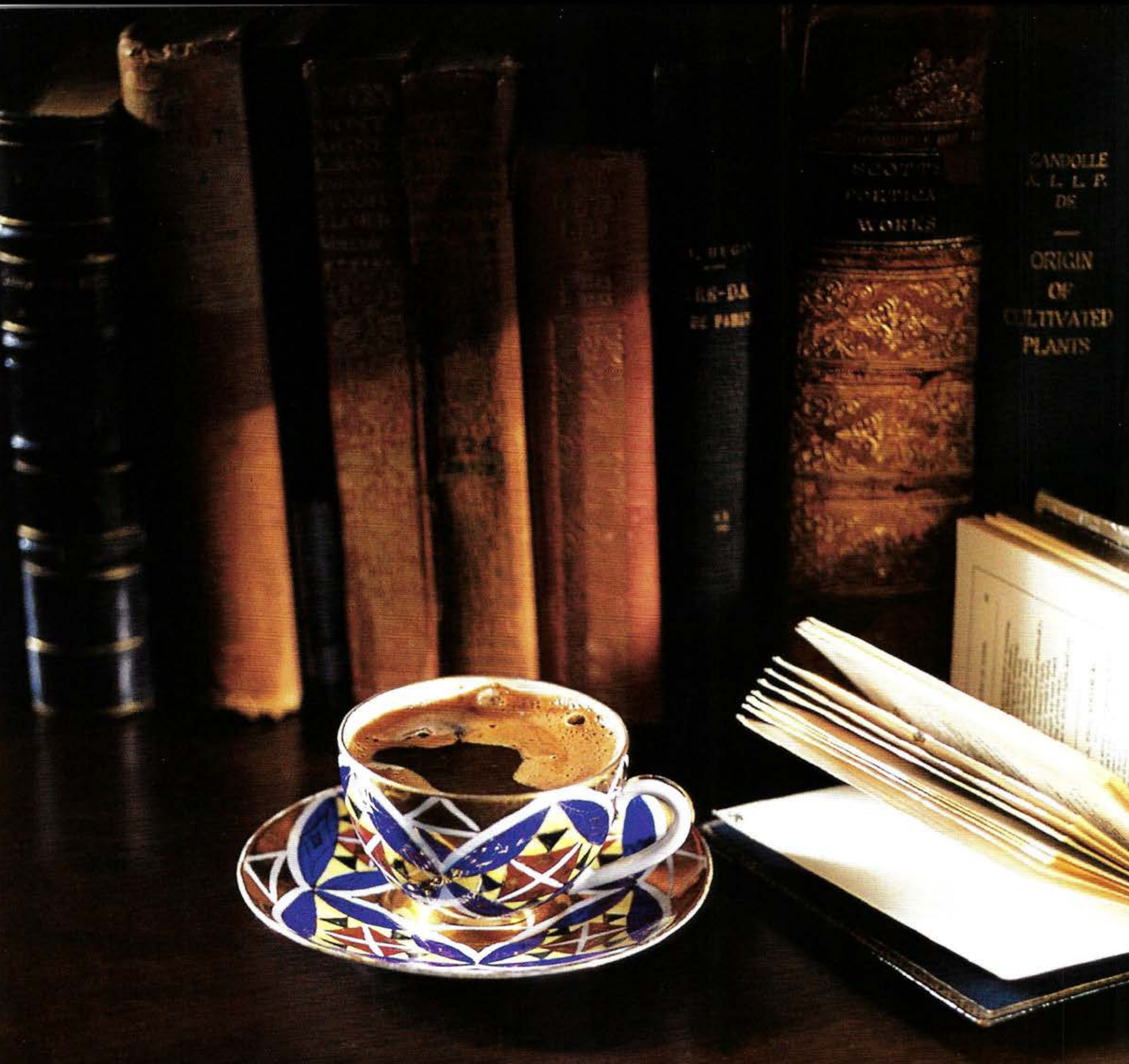
As ever with Ambler's plots, this one is far from improbable. An engineer, Graham, finds himself sent to Istanbul at the start of the Second World War to find out what the Turks need in the way of naval guns, on which he is an expert. At the time, there was an Anglo–Turkish alliance, for both sides had something to fear from the ambitions of Fascist Italy. Ambler had devised a formula by which an ordinary Englishman is caught up in a nightmare of spying, seedy regimes and shiny-bottomed bureaucrats. An amiable man of conventional middle-class background – his wife is good with the servants – Graham is in Turkey on business. Incidentally, Ambler did his homework on the Istanbul of that era. His Turkish names and phrases are accurate, and he knows the geography of the place well (better than Graham Greene, in *Stamboul Train*, because Greene's advance gave out in Belgrade and he could only resort to guide-books). It was recognisably the great city of yore, but the government had moved to Ankara and Istanbul had begun to wither. The city still contained hundreds of thousands of non-Muslims, and many Russian refugees from the revolution and the civil war. There were seedy nightclubs associated with itinerant Hungarians who went from wagon-lit to wagon-lit in search of mugs. Not entirely convincingly – Graham is no James Bond – our hero gets caught up with one. Then, for unknown reasons, someone tries to kill him. "Death, he told himself, would not be so bad. A moment of astonishment, and it would be over. He had to die sooner or later, and a bullet through the base of the skull would be better than months of illness when he was old." The denouement occurs superbly and to your utter surprise in the last few pages.



The book was filmed in 1942, starring Joseph Cotten. There is a central figure, a Turkish intelligence chief (Orson Welles), wearing the Caucasian *kalpak* lambswool hat, whose role is as saviour. In all probability, the film was made at that time by Hollywood as part of some propaganda campaign to entice the Turks to give up their neutrality (which they did rather late in the day, in 1945).

Until the Hitler–Stalin Pact of 1939, Ambler would have counted a Soviet agent among the good guys. In *Journey into Fear* that was no longer right, and it is the Turks who take over: Graham is warned by their intelligence chief, and protected by him and a self-sacrificing Turkish agent. At the time Turkey had an exceedingly good press. A general of genius, Kemal Atatürk had spearheaded a nationalist defence against invasion, after the First World War, by Greeks and Armenians and Italians and French and British (who occupied Istanbul for almost five years). The British, especially, respected Atatürk, and, once you had scraped off the cultural differences, the two sides got along rather well. Between the wars, Atatürk's modernisation of his country counted as a model. The university system was modernised by an extraordinary cohort from the West, Einstein and Bartok at the head; the Busch Quartet of Glyndebourne fame reigned over the music; John Dewey advised on education (fortunately he was not allowed to do too much damage). It was all quite remarkably successful, and a country gripped by malaria and illiteracy in 1922, having lost a quarter of its population in wartime disasters, was healthy and literate by 1938, when Atatürk died – prematurely and much to his country's loss. It is in this context that Ambler's thriller has to be read. It gives a more accurate account of the country than that brilliant but misleading film *Midnight Express*. ◆

● *This is an edited extract from Norman Stone's introduction to Journey into Fear, one of five Eric Ambler novels republished by Penguin in May 2009*


SCOTT'S
POETICAL
WORKS
CANDOLLE
A. L. L. P.
DE
ORIGIN
OF
CULTIVATED
PLANTS

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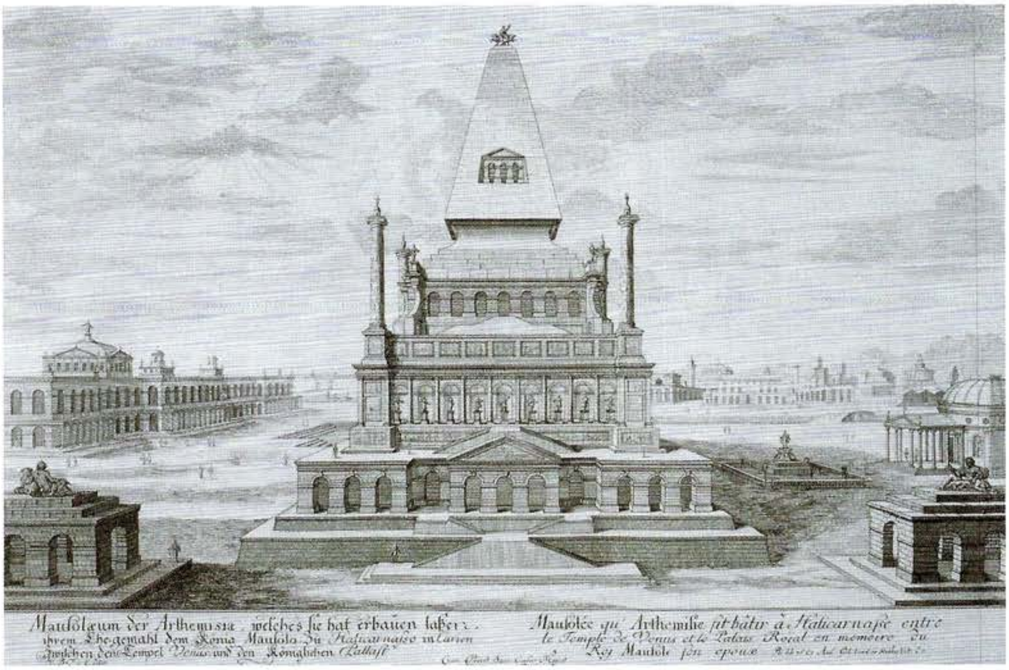
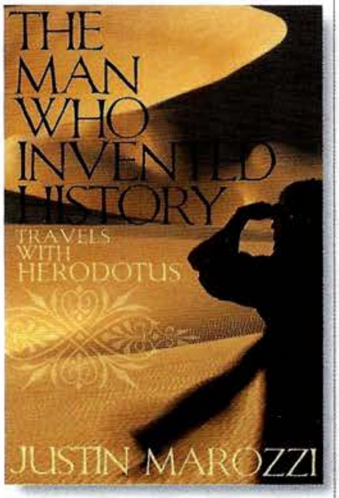
OUR MAN IN HALICARNASSUS

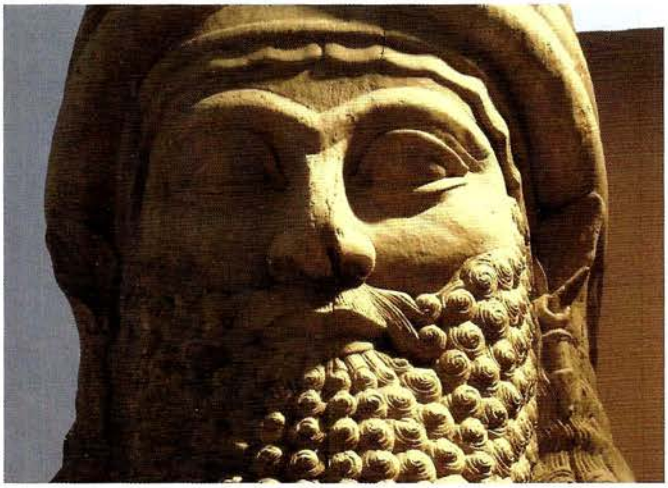
THE MAN WHO INVENTED HISTORY: TRAVELS WITH HERODOTUS

By Justin Marozzi,
John Murray, £25

JUSTIN MAROZZI, AUTHOR OF A NEW BOOK ON THE WORLD'S FIRST GREAT EXPLORER, EXPLAINS HIS FASCINATION WITH HERODOTUS


Mauſolæum der Arthemiſia welches ſie hat erbauen laſſen ihrem Ehegemahl dem König Mauſolo zu Halicarnaſso in Carien zwiſchen dem Tempel Veneris und den Königlichen Pallaſt
Mausolée qu' Arthemise fit bâtir à Halicarnasse entre le Temple de Venus et le Palais Royal en memoire du Roy Mausole son epoux


THE MAN WHO INVENTED HISTORY
TRAVELS WITH HERODOTUS
JUSTIN MAROZZI



Where better to begin a Herodotean journey of discovery than the historian's home town of Bodrum, the ancient city of Halicarnassus on the Aegean coast? The opening words of the magisterial *Histories*, in which Herodotus set out his world-changing ambition to enshrine the past, make it clear this is the one place we can be absolutely sure he knew.

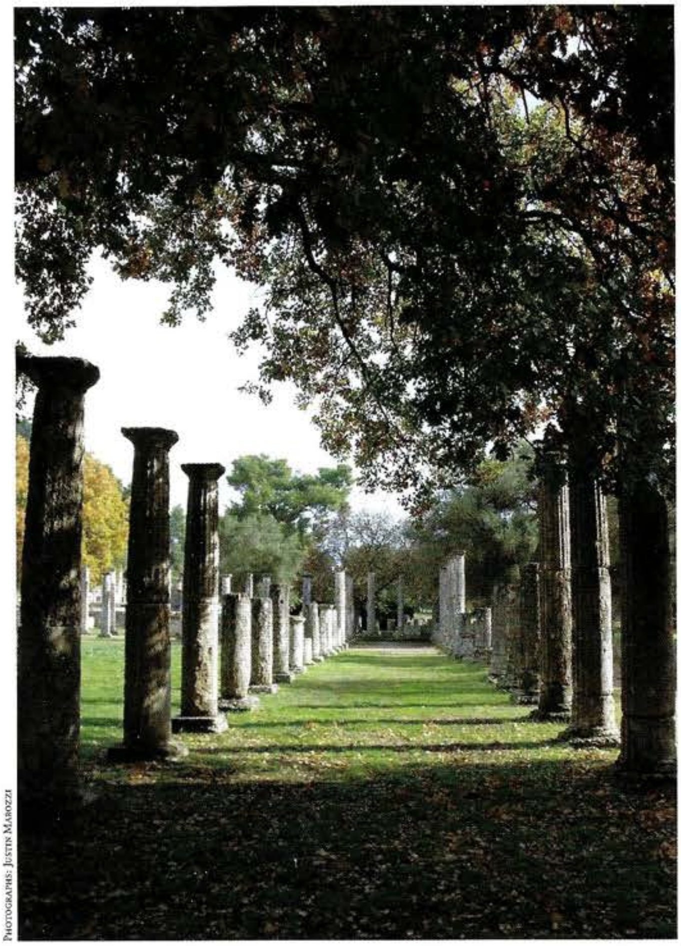
"Herodotus of Halicarnassus here displays his inquiry, so that human achievements may not become forgotten in time, and great and marvellous deeds – some displayed by Greeks, some by barbarians – may not be without their glory; and especially to show why the two peoples fought each other."

We do not know if Herodotus visited Babylon; we are not sure he really made it as far south as the First Cataract on the Nile (though I happen to think he did) and we cannot be certain about most of the details of his lifetime's prolific wanderings around the Mediterranean, Aegean and Middle East in the fifth century BC, but we do know he came from Halicarnassus.

Two-and-a-half thousand years ago, this coastline on the margins of Asia was dotted with Greek cities. It wasn't a bad stepping-off point for a man who liked to travel. Egypt was less than 400 miles away to the south. The islands of the Aegean and the mainland cities of Miletus, Priene and Ephesus were on his doorstep. Across the water, beyond the haphazard sprinkling of the Dodecanese and the Cyclades, great Athens glimmered like a beacon. To his east lay the centre of the Persian empire, Sardis, Babylon and beyond.

It is not easy to imagine Herodotus in Bodrum today. What would he have made of the sign on the waterfront that reads: "Come on our Boat for Fun and Frolic, The Captain is an Alcoholic!"? Though the concept might have amused him, the Father of History, it is probably fair to say, was not a natural booze-cruise man. He is easier to picture in the harbour taverns of Halicarnassus, talking to sailors about the journeys they had made, the lands they had visited, quizzing them about distances, climates, cultures, monuments and languages, standing a few rounds to loosen their tongues, palling up with merchants and foreign passengers from North Africa, Cyprus, Persia, Palestine and across the Greek archipelago in his efforts to understand and explain the world about him.

It is thanks to Cicero that Herodotus is widely known as "the Father of History", but he was also the world's first travel writer, foreign correspondent and investigative reporter, a



PHOTOGRAPHS: JUSTIN MAROZZI

OPPOSITE: THE MAUSOLEUM OF HALICARNASSUS IN HERODOTUS' BIRTHPLACE (TOP); THE HUMAN HEAD OF A WINGED BULL FROM SARGON'S PALACE AT KHORSABAD, IN THE IRAQ NATIONAL MUSEUM (BELOW). ABOVE: OLYMPIA, WHERE HERODOTUS MAY HAVE LECTURED. TOP RIGHT: DELPHI'S TREASURY OF THE ATHENIANS

pioneering geographer and anthropologist, madcap explorer, occasional dramatist and irrepressible storyteller. Whatever his shortcomings as a historian (he is commonly, though often unfairly, accused of making things up), he is more readable than most of his successors writing today.

The writer of *The Histories* was unlikely to have been the shy, retiring traveller with his nose buried in a papyrus, aloof from his fellow men. He would have been out and about, as his writing suggests, engaged and engaging, talking to anyone with a story to tell, collecting facts and folktales, histories, genealogies, legends and anecdotes, entertaining us at every turn. His inquiries and investigations did not consist of analysing, synthesising and criticising other people's research from the comfort of an office or library. He did not have that luxury. He could never have been an armchair historian even if he had wanted to be, for there were no other historians to study. He was the first.

Literal landmarks on the Herodotean trail – from Thebes/Luxor and the ancient Oracle of Ammon in the Egyptian oasis of Siwa to Athens, Olympia and Delphi – often prove less remarkable than the parallels that emerge unexpectedly from them. The sexual free-for-all in Bodrum, for example, undeniably one of the place's chief attractions for the younger generation, carries unmistakable echoes of Herodotus.

The Histories is vigorous testimony to his boundless fascination with sex. He writes about incestuous sex (father and daughter), divine sex (god and priestess), licentious sex, romantic sex, adulterous sex, comic sex (an impotent king), animal sex, bestiality (woman and goat) and necrophilia (Egyptian embalmer and corpse). There is no end to it. Bodrum's promiscuity recalls his notes on the Nasamones tribe of Libya, where "It is the custom, at a man's first marriage, to give a party, at which the bride is enjoyed by each of the guests in turn; they take her one after the other, then give her a present..."

More seriously, when travelling in Iraq, Herodotus's spellbinding account of the Persian Wars brings powerful reminders of the tragic consequences of hubris. In his survey of that early clash of civilisations between a fledgling West and mighty East, between embryonic democracy and dictatorship, there are lessons – inevitably ignored – for the present. Perhaps Herodotus would have seen shades of Darius and Xerxes in President Bush's triumphalist appearance on the aircraft carrier *USS Abraham Lincoln* on May 1, 2003 beneath a banner that read "Mission Accomplished". Hubris on a grand scale.

Herodotus celebrates the glory of human diversity with a vigour that infuriated parochial Plutarch, who unkindly dubbed him "the Father of Lies". Like a 19th-century explorer kicking African dust from his boots as he lectures in the hallowed halls of the Royal Geographical Society on some obscure tribe, Herodotus takes us into the mysterious world of the Libyans and Lydians, Egyptians and Ethiopians, the Massagetae and the Scythians, Thracians, Persians, Babylonians and Indians... Who are these people, he asks, where did they come from, what makes them tick? How do their customs – political, social, sexual, architectural, religious, commercial – differ from ours? What can we learn from them?

Though it was developed 2,500 years ago the Herodotean world view is surprisingly modern: respect foreign customs and cultures; stay within your natural borders; watch out for imperial overstretch; beware hubris leading you to nemesis. And never rest on your laurels, because, as the wise man Solon warns the prodigiously rich Lydian King Croesus in *The Histories*: "Often enough God gives man a glimpse of happiness then utterly ruins him." Who would argue with that? ◆

OUT OF THE FIRE

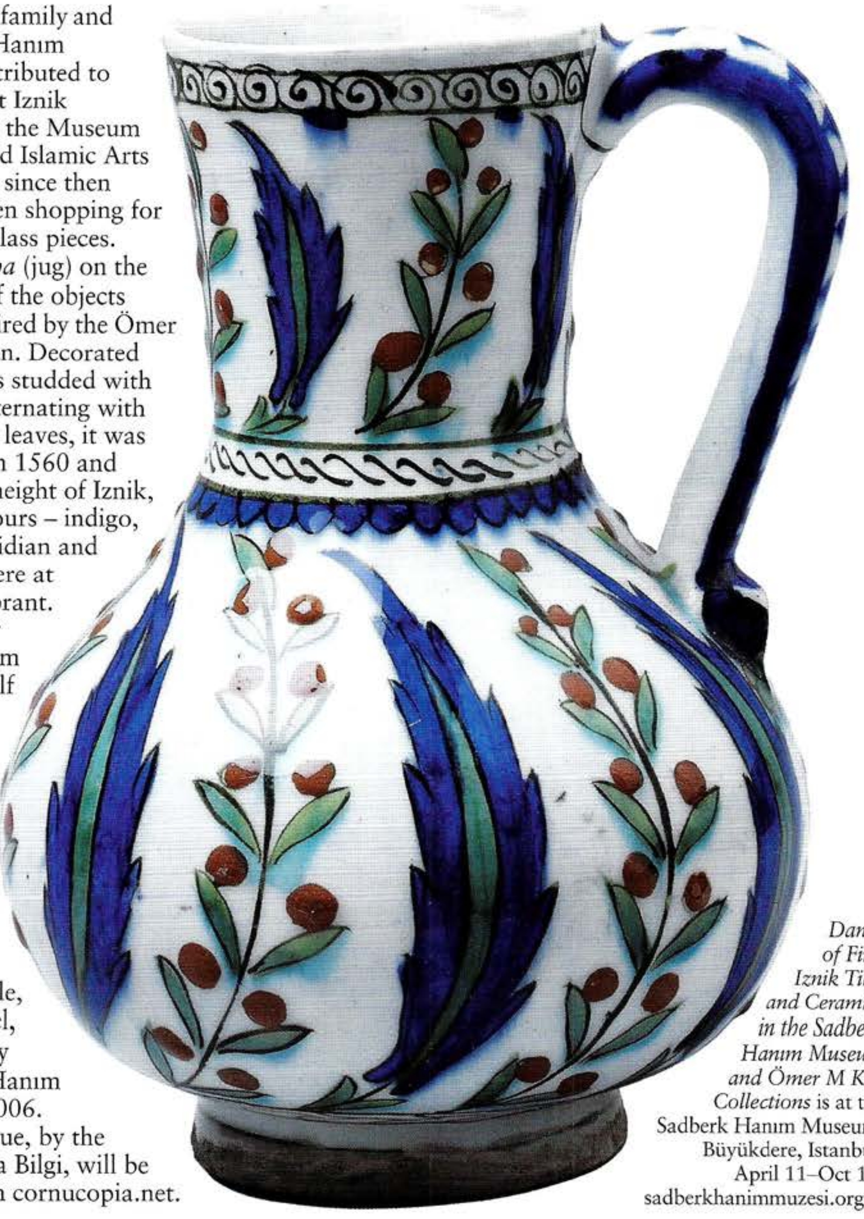
It is two decades since Istanbul held the last great exhibition of Iznik ceramics, which created a stir and gave birth to a classic catalogue, much sought-after and recently reissued. This year's Iznik show, 'Dance of Fire' at the Sadberk Hanım Museum – some 350 masterpieces belonging to the museum and to the great Koç dynasty – promises to be equally memorable. And the catalogue is set fair to become another collector's item

Both the Koç family and the Sadberk Hanım Museum contributed to Istanbul's first Iznik exhibition, at the Museum of Turkish and Islamic Arts in 1989. And since then both have been shopping for more world-class pieces.

The *maşrapa* (jug) on the right is one of the objects recently acquired by the Ömer Koç Collection. Decorated with branches studded with red berries alternating with elongated saz leaves, it was made between 1560 and 1580, at the height of Iznik, when the colours – indigo, turquoise, viridian and coral red – were at their most vibrant.

The tile, far right, also from the second half of the 16th century, depicts an Iznik vase spilling over with flowers and has a strong Chinese cloudband border. The tile, part of a panel, was bought by the Sadberk Hanım Museum in 2006.

The catalogue, by the curator, Hülya Bilgi, will be available from cornucopia.net.



Dance of Fire: Iznik Tiles and Ceramics in the Sadberk Hanım Museum and Ömer M Koç Collections is at the Sadberk Hanım Museum, Büyükdere, Istanbul, April 11–Oct 11, sadberkhanimmuzesi.org.tr

THE MARCH LORDS

Caroline Finkel

THE SHAPING OF THE OTTOMAN BALKANS 1350–1550

By Heath W Lowry
Bahçeşehir University Publications, TL40

THE EVRENOS DYNASTY OF YENICE VARDAR (GIANNITSA)

By Heath W Lowry and Ismail E Erünsal
Reprinted from *Journal of Ottoman Studies*, v.32 (Fall, 2008), pp.1–134

Just as I was completing my consideration of Heath Lowry's latest work, there arrived on my desk an even more recent study that proved to be the remarkable coda to an already revisionist account of the first Ottoman centuries in northern Greece. Lowry is a prolific author on the nascent Ottoman era, and a notable contributor to this magazine. His aim is nothing less than the rewriting of early Ottoman history, a topic he addressed in *The Nature of the Early Ottoman State*, reviewed in CORNUCOPIA 29.

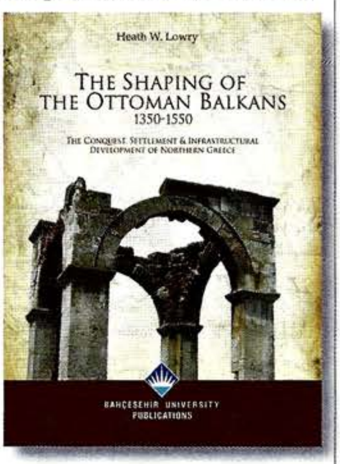
Lowry's contention is that our understanding of the formative years of the Ottoman Empire – of the time before it was an empire – is based on sources that distort the facts. These sources, he writes, are less a reflection of what had been than of how later writers chose to present the past.

The hero of Lowry's story is the *uçbey* (march lord) Hacı Gazi Evrenos Beğ, who died in 1417 and was associated with almost every conquest between the Meriç River in the east and the Adriatic in the west. Although Evrenos's name has not been erased from history, the part played by him and his family in establishing Ottoman rule in western Thrace and Macedonia, and maintaining it down the centuries, was egregiously downplayed by later chroniclers. Once the rule of the descendants of Osman was firmly established, and his dynasty had captured the coveted Byzantine capital and made it their own, no other family except the Ottoman was much praised in the annals of the empire, or lauded so extravagantly for its part in the making of this new world.

Evrenos was the most prominent of the march lords in the Balkans in the second half of the 14th century, and the now mostly ruined buildings marking their westerly progress provide the evidence that he and his family, the Evrenosoğulları, were responsible for pushing back the Ottoman frontier. They settled first in Gümülcine (modern Komotini), then in Siroz (Serres) and finally in Yenice Vardar (Giannitsa). Evrenos endowed these cities, and other sites along his route, with mosques and the infrastructure of urban and commercial life. In Yenice Vardar, for instance, he built an inn, a seminary, a small mosque, a soup kitchen, a Friday mosque, a double bathhouse and an aqueduct. Identifying these has taken Lowry on an extraordinary journey into territory that is familiar, yet hitherto so little understood that he can propose we forget most of what we thought we knew about the first Ottoman conquests.

As well as searching on the ground for architectural remains of the conquerors of Thrace and Macedonia, Lowry has scoured the region's 15th-century archives, where the properties endowed by Evrenos and his ilk are recorded. One later historian in whom he places his trust is Evliya Çelebi, who recorded his visit to the region in 1668 in his *Book of Travels*. Though beholden to the Ottoman court like most other contemporary writers, Evliya was not prepared to suppress information. Lowry is fortunate in having located calligraphic inscriptions, some considered lost, and photographs taken before Evrenos's buildings were destroyed. Most of the rest of the many photographs in these books are his own.

Lowry's findings lead him to the view that the Osmanoğulları – the Ottomans – were no more than first among equals at this time. He also rejects the view that their westward push was merely a series of raids for slaves and booty, arguing that they had planned a campaign of conquest from the outset, as the permanence of the monuments they built eloquently testifies.


Heath W. Lowry
THE SHAPING OF THE OTTOMAN BALKANS
1350-1550
The Conquest, Settlement & Infrastructural Development of Northern Greece
BAHÇEŞEHIR UNIVERSITY PUBLICATIONS

It has long been known that the warriors in the vanguard of the Balkan conquests were accompanied by great numbers of dervishes, who were among the earliest settlers in the new territories. The conquerors built soup kitchens and convents for their welfare; Lowry's research reveals that there were 65 soup kitchens in northern and central Greece between 1350 and 1750, and 267 convents of various dervish groups, among which Bektashi and Halveti seem to have predominated.

Lowry takes as case studies a host of topics: the fortifications of Selanik (Saloniki), previously considered Byzantine but here shown to be Ottoman; urban life in Siroz according to the evidence of the surviving monuments and the city's 1455–1478 tax registers; the eastern Macedonian town of Zihne, abandoned at the end of the 19th century, now an overgrown field of architectural remains; the creation by Süleyman I's grand vizier Ibrahim Pasha of the north Aegean coastal town of Kavala; and the hot springs of northern Greece and the bathhouses built to harness their waters.

The writing of Lowry's weighty tome was well advanced when he was contacted by the present-day descendants of the mighty Evrenos Beğ, in whose possession is a family tree drawn up around 1680 and a number of old family photographs. The first of these reveals that Evrenos had seven sons and at least two daughters, and names their descendants. Six of these children were borne by two Christian concubines, and the two daughters mentioned were given to other march lords, presumably as a gesture of class solidarity. The family tree also details exactly where in the dynastic burial ground in Yenice Vardar Evrenos and his immediate descendants are buried. Lowry was able to locate some of their tombs. Evrenos's own mausoleum was rebuilt in 1885–86, and is depicted in a late-19th-century photograph showing it crowded with the stones of his later kin. It was again reconstructed in 1908–10, just before many of the family left their ancestral home on the arrival of the Greek army in 1912. Those who remained were "exchanged" for Greeks of Anatolia in 1923–24.

In 2006 excavators removed Evrenos's bones during the course of renovation work in his mausoleum, and their return to his resting place is awaited. Members of his family are fêted in Giannitsa, and the role of their mighty forebear and his descendants in creating and beautifying the city over the centuries is at last acknowledged in a place where the Ottoman past was previously denied.

Caroline Finkel is the author of Osman's Dream: The Story of the Ottoman Empire 1300–1923 *(John Murray, £12.95).*

- *The offprint of Heath Lowry's article,* The Evrenos Dynasty of Yenice Vardar, *may be obtained through* CORNUCOPIA *at $6, inc p&p. Lowry's account of two years in a remote western Anatolian village in the 1960s,* An Ongoing Affair: Turkey and I, *has recently been published by Çitlembik. All books from cornucopia.net*

ANCIENT RIGHTS

Christian Tyler

WHO OWNS ANTIQUITY? MUSEUMS AND THE BATTLE OVER OUR ANCIENT HERITAGE

By James Cuno
Princeton University, £14.95

In the great dispute over the Elgin Marbles, surely the most eloquent argument is the decision of the Greek government to build a grand home for them at the foot of the Acropolis in Athens. The new museum is due to open, after many delays, in March.

Its top floor is a Parthenon-shaped glass gallery designed to hold all the extant pieces of the frieze that once adorned the temple of Athena – especially the panels and pediment figures removed 200 years ago by Lord Elgin, British ambassador to the Ottoman court (then the occupying power in Greece) and lodged in the British Museum.

Like jungle-dwellers with their cargo cult, the Greeks seem to be hoping that the very act of making a nice home for the Marbles will magically result in their being flown back to Athens. Or perhaps they have decided to stop beating the national drum, drop the legal arguments and rely instead on British goodwill.

If so, that will be welcomed by museum curators such as James Cuno of the Art Institute of Chicago, author of this book. For his case is that state intervention is not only stifling the antiquities trade but destroying the transmission of our cultural inheritance. His call to free up the market and reassertion of the pre-eminent role of museums will upset a lot of people. Cuno was driven to this view by minor controversies about provenance during his directorship of the Harvard University Art Museums. He was astonished, for example, to hear a colleague say she would rather see an unprovenanced antiquity destroyed than acquired by a museum.

In this examination of the nationalist agenda pursued by many governments, Cuno charts the ever more prescriptive conventions adopted at Unesco and draws extensively on policies followed by Greece, Italy and Iraq. But his chief targets are China and Turkey.

The "Turkish question", as he calls it, raises in acute form the political problems of ownership and restitution so heatedly illustrated by the Elgin Marbles dispute. The Ottoman empire was unusually cosmopolitan. Through expansion, trade and the exchange of gifts the sultans acquired artefacts of many civilisations. In 1846, when Sultan Abdülmecid founded the Istanbul Archaeological Museum, imperial governors were told to send representative works of art to the capital. Among the rare and beautiful objects to arrive was the Alexander Sarcophagus from the royal necropolis of Sidon. But, asks Cuno, in what sense does the Turkish government own this piece? Would it make sense for the government of modern Lebanon to claim its return? What of manuscripts acquired by Sultan Mehmet II from the Byzantine court library, his copies of Arrian's *Anabasis of Alexander*, Homer's *Iliad*, and Arabic and Persian texts? If capital cities of all former empires were obliged to return all the objects they had acquired, some of our greatest museums would be devastated. And where would the process of restitution end?

Turkey's restrictive policy on the export and ownership of antiquities dates from the later 19th century. But after the Ottoman Empire's collapse, Mustafa Kemal's Republic added a new twist by redefining Turkish identity in geographically much narrower, Anatolian, terms. A recent book (*The Turkic Speaking Peoples: 2,000 years of art and culture from Inner Asia to the Balkans*) describes Atatürk, at a German embassy reception, congratulating an archaeologist on recovering the remains of "his people's ancestors" from the Hittite capital of Boğazköy. For Kemal regarded the Hittites, Sumerians, Phrygians, Lydians, Carians – all past inhabitants of Anatolia – as the real Turkish ancestors, ignoring the Turkic nomads of Siberia and Mongolia who began arriving in AD 1000. He reinforced this vision with a splendid new Museum of Anatolian Civilisations in Ankara.

And why not? Because, replies Cuno, such identity-building is often done at the expense of others. It is a victor's conceit. In Turkey's case it was done at the expense of the Kurds, denied ownership of their heritage, he claims, on the illogical grounds that they were always part of someone else's dominion. (The same fate befell the Uighurs, the indigenous Turkic people of western China). "Nation-building subjects the past and the present to the rigours of identity control. And archaeology and national museums are used as a means of enforcing that control." State control is aided and abetted by the new "post-processual" school of archaeologists who, influenced by the French philosopher Michel Foucault, see their job to be as much cultural-political as scientific. And of course they depend on the state for permission to dig.

Tough laws are usually justified as a deterrent to illegal excavation and looting. Cuno says they have made things worse. The scarcity of antiquities in the market has sent prices soaring, increasing the incentive for tomb-robbers, smugglers and shady dealers. The answer, he says, is to revert to the system of partage, where accredited archaeologists are encouraged to dig in return for dividing the spoils with the host country or region. That would make surveillance easier and open up more sites. Private individuals finding buried treasure should be compensated, as in the UK.

The issue is not ownership, but stewardship. The custody of antiquities should be dictated by the needs of conservation, knowledge and public access. Does this favour the old museums? Yes, but it would allow younger nations to build "encyclopaedic" collections illustrating the interconnection of their many pasts. Or, in the words of a British Museum spokesman defending its custody of the Elgin Marbles, to allow millions of people "to explore the complex network of interconnected world cultures".

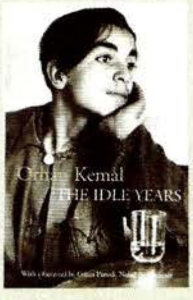
James Cuno's manifesto is also

BITTERSWEET MEMORIES

THE IDLE YEARS

By Orhan Kemal
translated by Cengiz Lugal
(Peter Owen)

It is a great pleasure to welcome an English translation of Orhan Kemal's *Yıllar*, a delightful novel, or rather two linked autobiographical novels, about growing up in the 1920s and 1930s, a classic account of the hardships and fun of Turkish provincial life. The nameless narrator vividly recounts the story of his life from infancy to marriage against the backdrop of the early Republic. His initially well-to-do family loses its money, endures several years of exile in Beirut, but he always holds on to his hope and vitality. The concluding scene, in which the newly married narrator and his wife have to give back the borrowed gold displayed at their wedding, but are consoled that they have each other, epitomises the bittersweet but never sentimental spirit of the novel.



Orhan Kemal's Turkish captures the voices and the humanity of his characters so well that they ring in the memory long afterwards. Turning these voices into 21st-century English is no easy task, but Cengiz Lugal has produced a version which at last gives English-speaking readers a chance to discover Orhan Kemal and his world for themselves. DAVID BARCHARD thought-provoking. I think he underestimates the forces of national interest. His call to share the past's legacy may be idealistic, but it seems right. He should be congratulated for sticking his head above the parapet in this hostile climate.

There will always be objects, like the Elgin Marbles, whose historical context or national symbolism is irresistibly strong. But cannot they, too, be shared? Approached in the right way, even the British Museum might be persuaded into a joint-custody agreement (a time-share, say?) with the Acropolis museum. Of course, in return London would need something pretty spectacular to fill the space they left.

FROM HEAVEN TO HELL

David Barchard

Paradise Lost: Smyrna 1922

By Giles Milton
Sceptre, £8.99

History of the Later Roman Empire AD 284–641

By Stephen Mitchell
Blackwell, £20.99

Dhen xechname – We do not forget – proclaims the short commercial one occasionally sees on Greek TV channels, showing pictures of Izmir as it was nearly a century ago. For perhaps half a century before 1919, when Greek soldiers landed there intending to annex it to Greece, the city's Greek and Levantine inhabitants seem to have assumed the town was destined to shake off Turkish rule and follow Crete, Epirus, Thessaly and Selanik by becoming part of Greece. At least that is the impression that comes from contemporary sources such as British consular archives.

There is just one snag. In most of the regions where Greek irredentism had been successful in the 19th century, Greek Christians were in the majority. But not in Anatolia, where on the eve of the First World War there were 15 million Muslims, but only 1.7 million Greeks. The province of Aydın, of which Izmir was the main city and which was the heartland of the invasion, was home to about 1.25 million Muslims, but only 300,000 Greeks and 19,000 Armenians.

This implied that the Greek invasion of Izmir and western Anatolia was likely to be extremely unpleasant for the majority. It was. Aubrey Herbert, almost the only British MP openly friendly towards the Turks in 1920, put questions to the British government about the atrocities against the Turkish population, only to be told the government had no information on the matter. Arnold Toynbee, a young professor of Greek, went out to investigate. He wrote a book blaming both sides for the atrocities he witnessed, showing there was a Turkish side to the story – and was stripped of his professorship at King's College London.

Giles Milton's *Paradise Lost: Smyrna 1922* has many faults, but the main problem is that, despite a jaunty style which is easy on the reader, he has done far too little background research to be in a position to hand out meaningful judgments on a complex and painful piece of history. Izmir ("Smyrna" to Milton) is treated as a Greek city, even though it first became Turkish in the 11th century. Some of his passing remarks hardly inspire confidence. The Şeyhülislam is referred to as a "body". Above all, he appears to know nothing of the international insurance reports produced after the fire which destroyed late-Ottoman Izmir – a pity, since these did not condemn the Turks. By the end of the book his narrative seems to be dividing those contemporary sources he does know into sheep and goats – the goats being eyewitnesses favourable to the Turkish view.

His main "sheep" is the rabidly Turcophobe US Consul in Izmir, George Horton, who wrote a diatribe against the Turks entitled *The Blight of Asia*, still sought-after by a certain kind of purchaser. For me *The Blight of Asia* is not a useful historical source but a straightforwardly racist tract by a man who may have been an eyewitness but was dominated by obsessive political passions, and whose works show him to have been almost comically ignorant about Turks and Muslims. On the evidence of his writings, he was manifestly not a very intelligent man.

Milton's most important other sources are the diaries and reminiscences of the city's British merchant families, including the Girauds and Whittalls. It seems not to occur to him that, splendid British and French dynasts though they were, these families were essentially a sort of colonial elite in an alien land, and their perceptions need to be handled with care if one is not to do injustice to the majority. He tells us that although their world has been smashed, one of today's Giraud family has "preserved a glimpse of paradise in an otherwise fallen world". None the less, "almost nine decades after the catastrophe, [he] is still engaged in a legal battle to get compensation for land and property that was confiscated".

Well, perhaps, but it is a little odd to omit any mention of the fact that in 21st-century Turkey the Girauds are high among the captains of Turkish industry and in the very forefront of Istanbul and Izmir society, while Izmir itself is vastly wealthier and demonstrably more contented than it ever was in Ottoman times. For Milton it is now just "a brash modern city".

The book ends with the news, most fiendish of all, that the local authorities in 2007 denied the Izmir Greek consular staff the right to perform an old Greek religious ritual, the blessing of the waters. The irony is that the refusal was probably based on the authorities' awareness of continuing irredentist views of Izmir, such as those which recur in this book and others like it – not to mention those TV commercials. Forgetting nothing and learning nothing is a hopeless strategy.

Stephen Mitchell's fine general history of the three-and-a-half centuries of the later Roman empire can be recommended to anyone looking for a steady and serene overview of one of the most spectacularly mystifying episodes in world history. It takes one from the military reformer Diocletian to the death of Heraclius in 641. In the interval the empire abandons paganism for Christianity and succumbs to Germanic tribes, who take just under a century to bring down Roman rule and civilisation in the West. At the end the empire limps on in the East, reduced to a rump state of (roughly) Turkey, Greece and southern Italy after the loss of the southern Mediterranean to the armies of Islam.

There has been an explosion of scholarship in the past half-century, all of it taken into account by Mitchell and lucidly explained. Perhaps designed as a textbook for first-year university students, this book is satisfying and even enjoyable reading. Its notes and bibliography will point readers helpfully in the directions needed for further research.

Mitchell's familiarity with the archaeological evidence from Turkey and Syria to Metz and the German frontier gives this book a special richness. It is fascinating to read, for example, that near the small modern Mediterranean resort of Üçağız are remains of the fish tanks of Aperlae, where the mollusc murex was bred to produce the emperor's purple dye.

This is a compact, economical treatment of a potentially unmanageable subject. My one quibble is that, like many another book on the Roman world, this account takes it a little too much for granted that the Romans are the forerunners of the Western world and fails to explore very deeply the ways in which they were radically unlike the modern West. The role of women is one example. Christianity helped some women, mainly aristocratic matrons, gain prominence, but the Roman woman and her role seem generally to be as obscure as in any Middle Eastern society. Yet they did have a role. They played a key part in Christianising Roman families, while the way in which his successors pursued and executed the luckless Prisca and Valeria, Diocletian's wife and daughter, is a backhanded tribute to at least their potential influence. ◆

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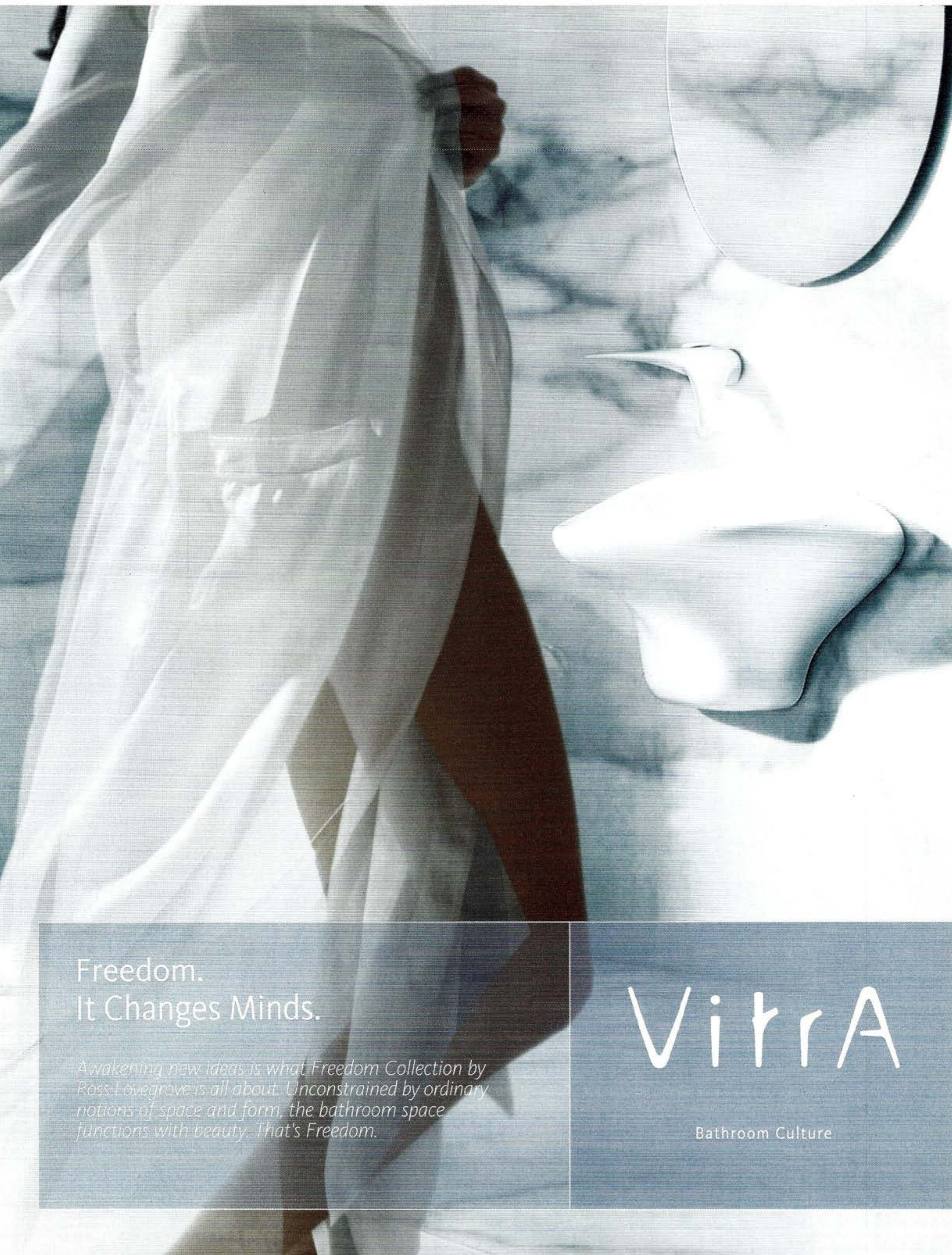

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THE GRAND BATHS OF ISTANBUL

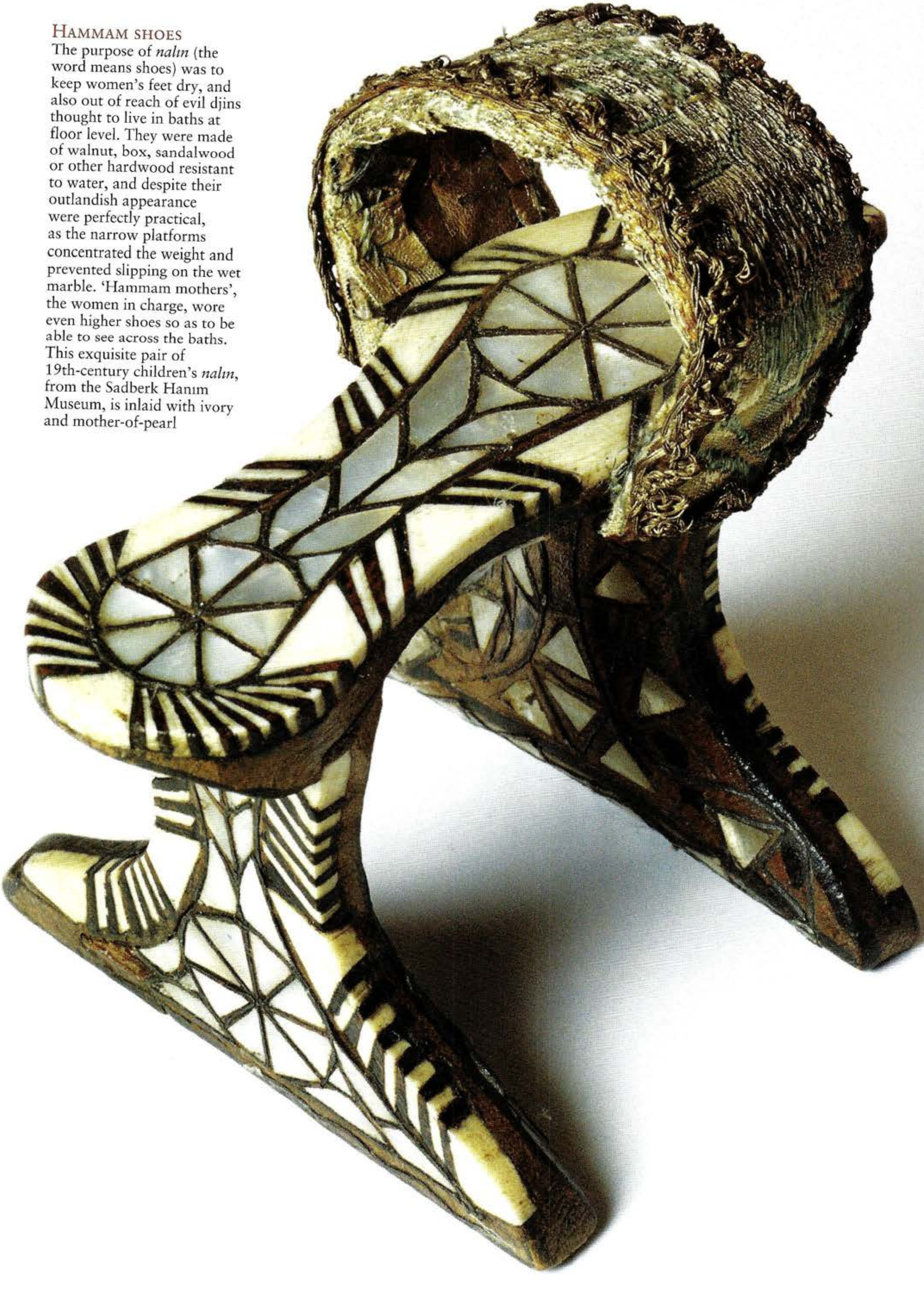
HAMMAMS

HAMMAM ESSENTIALS: SILVER BOWL, HAIR WRAP AND SCENTED SOAP

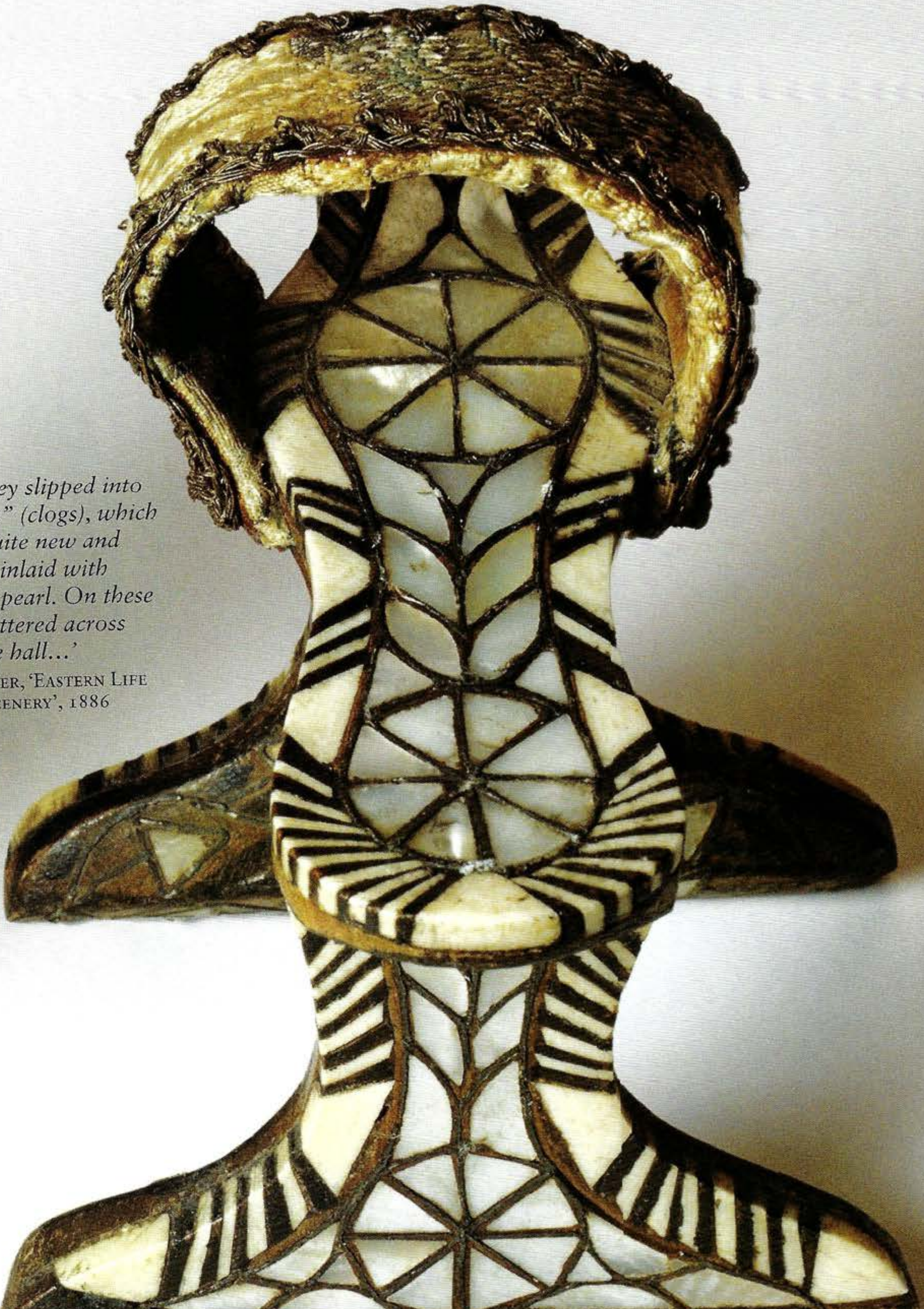
PHOTOGRAPHS: FRITZ VON DER SCHULENBURG. COURTESY OF THE SADBERK HANIM MUSEUM

Nowhere does the golden age of Ottoman life survive more vividly, and enjoyably, than in the hammam. Architecture, etiquette, gossip and sheer pleasure – *keyif* – are the essential ingredients. In the 16th century there were as many as 150 hammams in the marketplaces of Istanbul. Today there are far fewer, but the culture miraculously lives on. For Cornucopia's first foray into the world of Turkish baths, we invited the photographer Fritz von der Schulenburg to peer through the steam in four of Istanbul's grandest: the still-bustling Çemberlitaş Hammam, and the more reflective, even gloomy, Çinili, both the work of the Renaissance master Sinan; the luxurious 18th-century Galatasaray Hammam; and finally the baroque Cağaloğlu Hammam, last of the grand Ottoman baths – all of which have defied developers and renovation. Armchair bathers can immerse themselves in lively accounts by Mary Wortley Montagu, Charles White and other writers, and feast their eyes on exquisite paraphernalia from the city's Sadberk Hanım Museum.

LEFT: 19TH-CENTURY HAMMAM SHOES DECORATED WITH EMBOSSED SILVER



HAMMAM SHOES
The purpose of *nalın* (the word means shoes) was to keep women's feet dry, and also out of reach of evil djins thought to live in baths at floor level. They were made of walnut, box, sandalwood or other hardwood resistant to water, and despite their outlandish appearance were perfectly practical, as the narrow platforms concentrated the weight and prevented slipping on the wet marble. 'Hammam mothers', the women in charge, wore even higher shoes so as to be able to see across the baths. This exquisite pair of 19th-century children's *nalın*, from the Sadberk Hanım Museum, is inlaid with ivory and mother-of-pearl



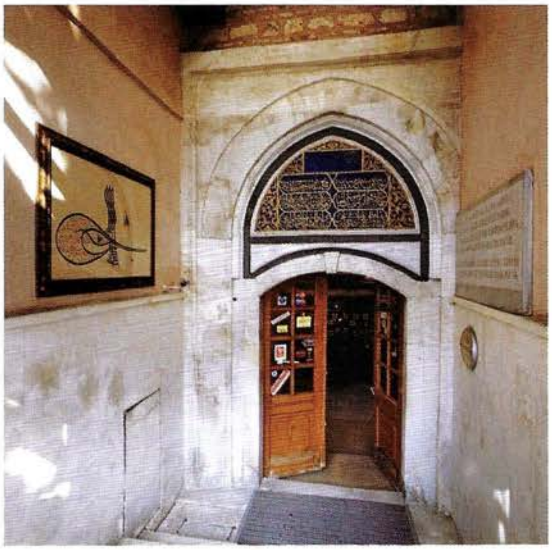
'...then they slipped into their "nalın" (clogs), which were quite new and richly inlaid with mother-of-pearl. On these they clattered across the hall...'

MRS WALKER, 'EASTERN LIFE AND SCENERY', 1886

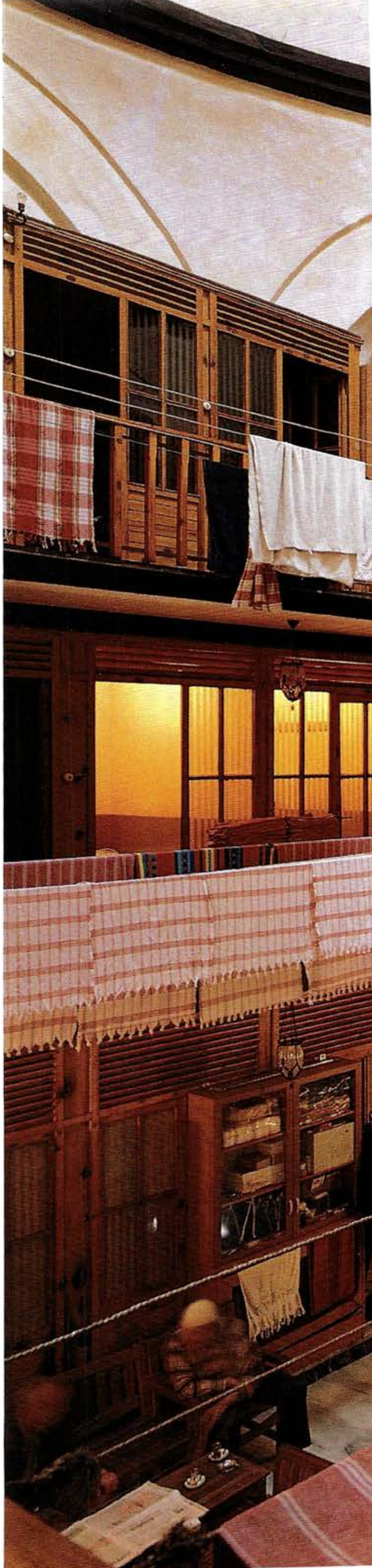
Çemberlitaş Hammam

THE QUEEN MOTHER'S BATHS

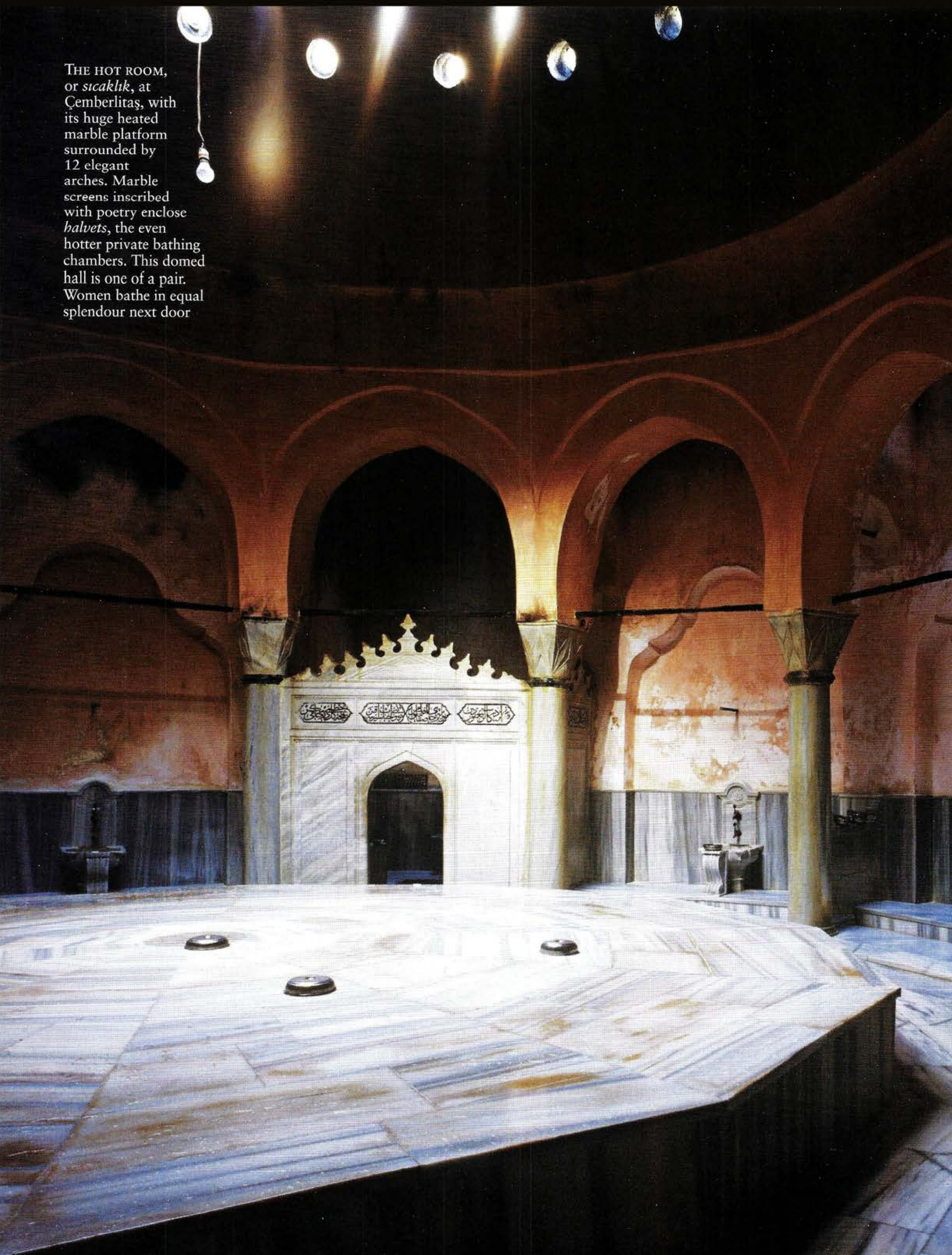
Splendid Renaissance baths still flourish at the entrance to Istanbul's Grand Bazaar. Built for the mother of Sultan Murad III, the all-powerful Nurbânu, and opened in 1584, today the Çemberlitaş Hammam is the liveliest of Istanbul's grand baths, and the perfect place to start



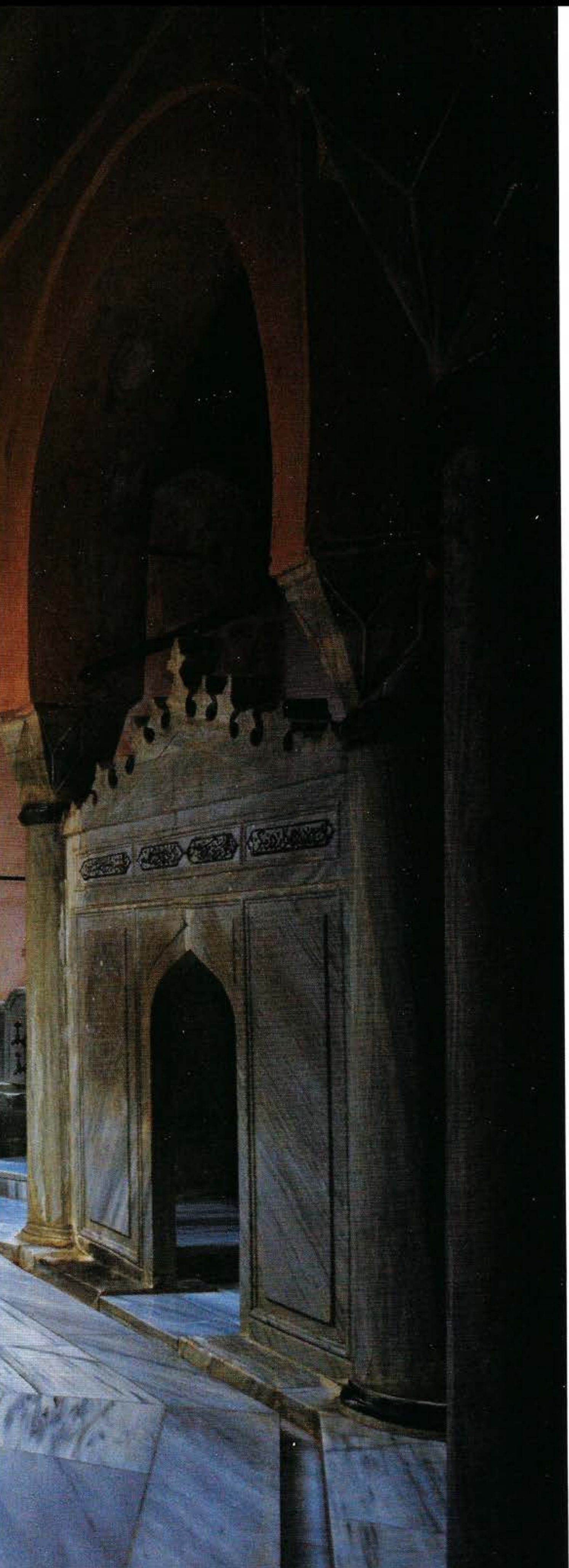
ABOVE: Over the doorway, an inscription by the grand vizier Köprülü Mehmed Pasha, who restored the baths in the 17th century, declares them "unrivalled"



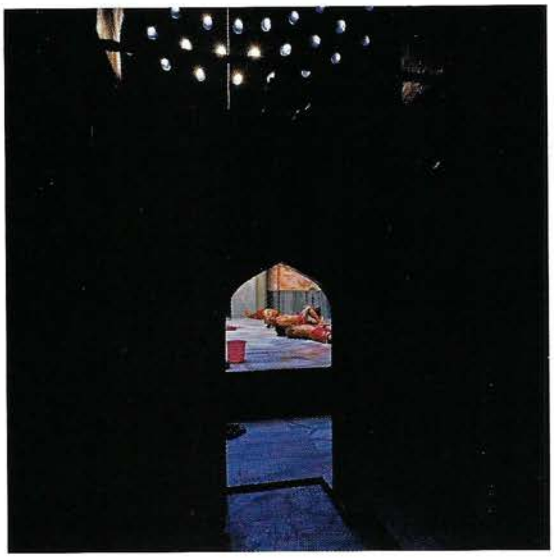
RIGHT: A visitor to Istanbul in 1608, Solomon Schweigger, was taken with the skilful way attendants handled the cloths bathers wrap round themselves, known then as *futa* and today as *peştemal*. They would hurl them up to dry on lines strung at a great height, "as if in the dome of a church". Disrobing halls, or *camegâh*, were generally larger than the baths themselves and served as the chief assembly hall in Ottoman cities, more important even than coffee houses



THE HOT ROOM, or *sıcaklık*, at Çemberlitaş, with its huge heated marble platform surrounded by 12 elegant arches. Marble screens inscribed with poetry enclose *halvets*, the even hotter private bathing chambers. This domed hall is one of a pair. Women bathe in equal splendour next door



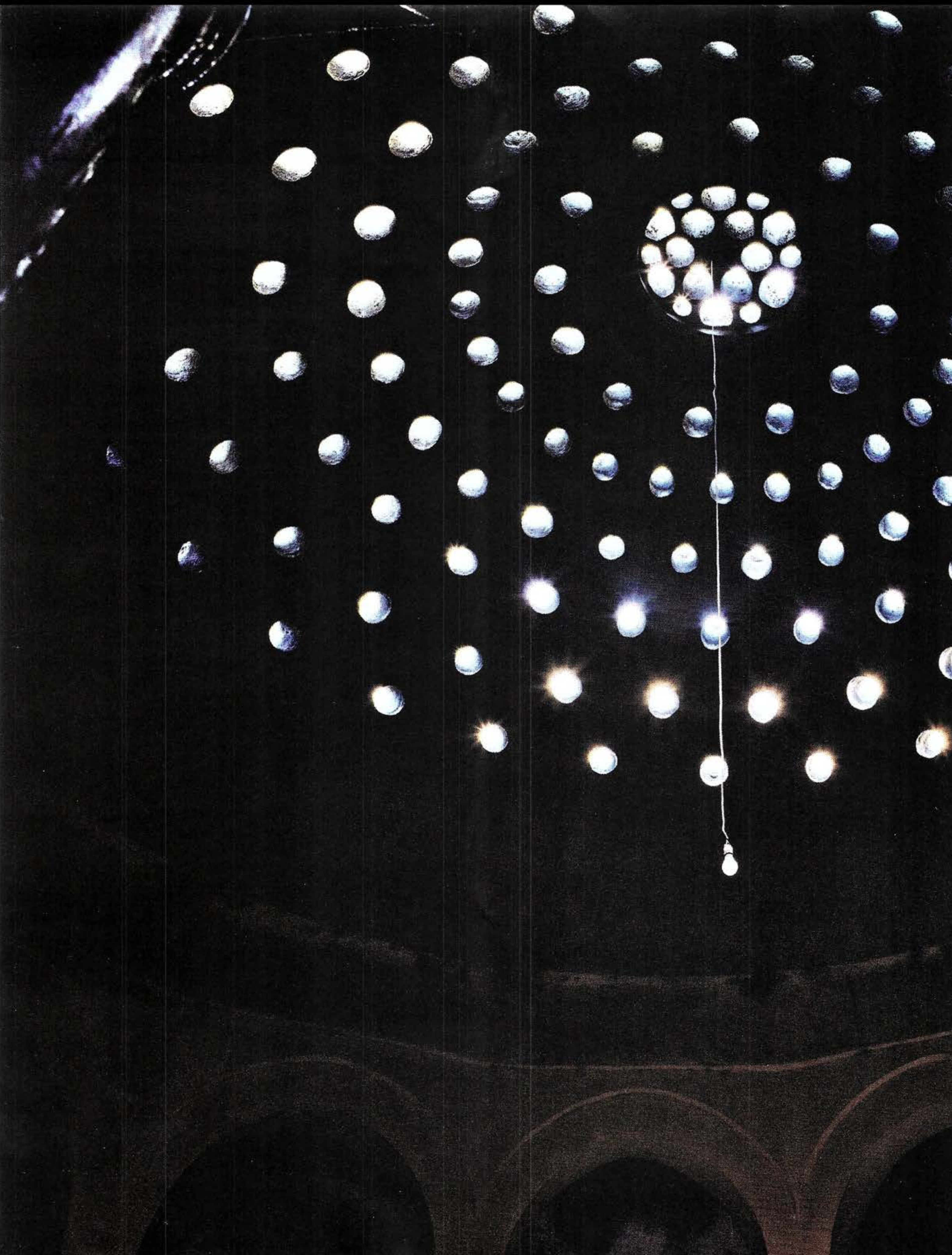
'THE HAND OF THE GREAT RENAISSANCE ARCHITECT SINAN IS EVIDENT IN THE GENTLY POINTED ARCHES, LACE-LIKE CARVING AND CLASSICAL ELEGANCE'



Nurbânu Sultan, wife of Selim II, was the intelligent, immensely wealthy patron of the Çemberlitaş baths, best-loved and liveliest of Istanbul's "marketplace" hammams. A thimble in her huge property portfolio, the double baths (for men and women) were shrewdly located on the Divanyolu, the road leading to Ayasofya and the Topkapı, at the entrance to the Grand Bazaar.

Nurbânu ordered the hammam in 1584, after rising to the powerful rank of Queen Mother – both out of charity and to provide income for her mosque across the Bosphorus in Üsküdar. Known until recently as the Valide Hamamı, or Queen Mother's baths, they were designed by Sinan, builder of mosques for sultans, at the height of his genius. The hand of the great Renaissance architect is evident in the gently pointed arches, lace-like marble carving and classical elegance. The baths are a soothing, contemplative contrast to the bustling bazaar a few feet away.

The hammam owes its state of preservation to the fact that in the 1650s it came under the protection of another powerful patron, the grand vizier Köprülü Mehmed Pasha, who built his mausoleum directly opposite, and, next to the baths, the Vezir Han, a gigantic hotel-cum-shopping arcade which at one time had its own private passage to the hammam.



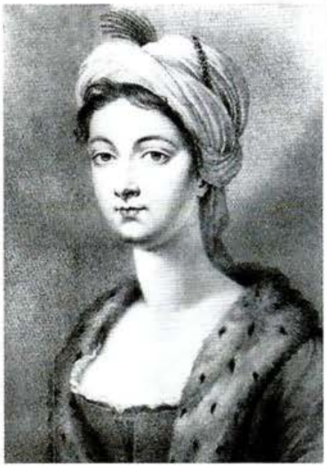
'THE QUEEN MOTHER'S BATHS WERE DESIGNED BY SINAN, BUILDER OF MOSQUES FOR SULTANS, AT THE HEIGHT OF HIS GENIUS'

GLORIOUS CONSTELLATION
An array of the glass bubbles known as 'elephant-eye' windows pierce the dome of the hot room in the Çemberlitaş Hammam, best viewed lying on the heated marble podium

FIRST-HAND ACCOUNTS

Steaming in Sofia

LADY MARY WORTLEY MONTAGU TAKES TIME OUT ON HER TRAVELS TO ENJOY THE 'BAGNIO'



LADY MARY WORTLEY MONTAGU (1689–1762), WIFE OF THE ENGLISH AMBASSADOR AT THE SUBLIME PORTE

This excerpt is from the 1803 edition of Lady Montagu's Works. *The wife of Sir Edward Wortley Montagu, English ambassador at the Sublime Porte, Lady Mary wrote a collection of vivid, chatty letters to friends in London, many to Alexander Pope. On her journey to Istanbul, she paused in Sofia, now the Bulgarian capital, then 'one of the most beautiful towns in the Ottoman Empire'. This letter to Lady Rich was written a few days later from 'Adrianople' (Edirne) in 1717*

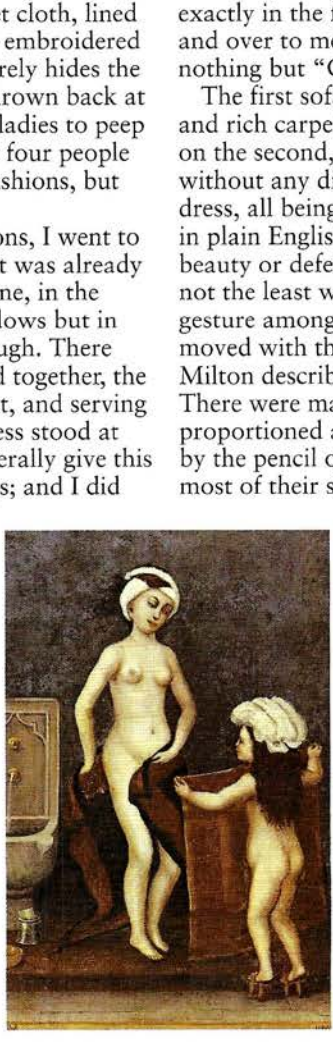
I won't trouble you with a relation of our tedious journey; but must not omit what I saw remarkable at Sophia, one of the most beautiful towns in the Turkish empire, and famous for its hot baths, that are resorted to for diversion and health. I stopped here one day, on purpose to see them; and, designing to go *incognito*, I hired a Turkish coach. These voitures are not at all like ours, but much more convenient for the country, the heat being so great that glasses would be very troublesome. They are made a great deal in the manner of the Dutch stage-coaches, having wooden lattices painted and gilded; the inside being also painted with baskets and nosegays of flowers, intermixed commonly with little poetical mottos. They are covered all over with scarlet cloth, lined with silk, and very often richly embroidered and fringed. This covering entirely hides the persons in them, but may be thrown back at pleasure, and thus permits the ladies to peep through the lattices. They hold four people very conveniently, seated on cushions, but not raised.

In one of these covered wagons, I went to the bagnio about ten o'clock. It was already full of women. It is built of stone, in the shape of a dome, with no windows but in the roof, which gives light enough. There were five of these domes joined together, the outmost being less than the rest, and serving only as a hall, where the portress stood at the door. Ladies of quality generally give this woman a crown or ten shillings; and I did not forget that ceremony. The next room is a very large one paved with marble, and all round it are two raised sofas of marble, one above another. There were four fountains of cold water in this room, falling first into marble basins, and then running on the floor in little channels, made for that purpose, which carried the streams into the next room, something less than this, with the same sort of marble sofas, but so hot with steams of sulphur proceeding from the baths joining to it, it was impossible to stay there with one's clothes on. The two other domes were the hot baths, one of which had cocks of cold water turning into it, to temper it to what degree of warmth the bathers pleased to have.

I was in my travelling habit, which is a riding dress, and certainly appeared very extraordinary to them. Yet there was not one of them that showed the least surprise or impertinent curiosity, but received me with all the obliging civility possible. I know of no European court, where the ladies would have behaved themselves in so polite a manner to such a stranger. I believe, upon the whole, there were two hundred women, and yet none of those disdainful smiles, and satirical whispers, that never fail in our assemblies, when any body appears that is not dressed exactly in the fashion. They repeated over and over to me; "*Guzél, pék guzél*," which is nothing but "Charming, very charming".

The first sofas were covered with cushions and rich carpets, on which sat the ladies; and on the second, their slaves behind them, but without any distinction of rank by their full dress, all being in the state of nature, that is, in plain English, stark naked, without any beauty or defect concealed. Yet there was not the least wanton smile or immodest gesture amongst them. They walked and moved with the same majestic grace, which Milton describes our general mother with. There were many amongst them, as exactly proportioned as ever any goddess was drawn by the pencil of a Guido or Titian – and most of their skins shiningly white, only adorned by their beautiful hair divided into many tresses, hanging on their shoulder, braided either with pearl or ribbon, perfectly representing the figures of the Graces.

I was here convinced of the truth of a reflection I have often made, that if it were the fashion to go naked, the face would be hardly observed. I perceived that the ladies of the most delicate skins and finest shapes had the greatest share of my admiration, though their faces were sometimes less beautiful than those of



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A MOTHER AND CHILD AT THE BATHS, 1745, BY THE OTTOMAN COURT PAINTER RAFAEL

SADBERK HANIM MUSEUM

SILK WRAPPERS, OR 'FUTA', LUXURIOUSLY WOVEN IN GOLD, OF THE TYPE THAT LADY MARY ENTHUSED ABOUT

their companions. To tell you the truth, I had wickedness enough, to wish secretly, that Mr Jervas [a pupil of Godfrey Kneller celebrated for his "portraits of females"] could have been there invisible.

I fancy it would have very much improved his art, to see so many fine women naked, in different postures, some in conversation, some working, others drinking coffee or sherbet, and many negligently lying on their cushions, while their slaves (generally pretty girls of seventeen or eighteen) were employed in braiding their hair in several pretty fancies. In short, it is the women's coffee-house, where all the news of the town is told, scandal invented, &c.

They generally take this diversion once a week, and stay there at least four or five hours, without getting cold by immediately coming out of the hot bath into the cold room, which was very surprising to me. The lady that seemed the most considerable among them, entreated me to sit by her, and would fain have undressed me for the bath. I excused myself with some difficulty. They being however all so earnest in persuading me, I was at last forced to open my shirt, and shew them my stays; which satisfied them very well; for, I saw, they believed I was locked up in that machine, and that it was not in my own power to open it, which contrivance they attributed to my husband.

I was charmed with their civility and beauty, and should have been very happy to pass more time with them; but that Mr Wortley resolving to pursue his journey early next morning, I was in haste to see the ruins of Justinian's church, which did not afford me so agreeable a prospect as I had left, being little more than a heap of stones.

Adieu, madam: I am sure I have now entertained you with an account of such a sight as you never saw in your life, and what no book of travels could inform you of, as it is no less than death for a man to be found in one of these places.

What other writers had to say ...about displays of luxury and grace

"[They] emerged from the shelter carefully enveloped in handsome striped silk wrappers which passing over the bosom and close under the arms, and falling nearly to the ankles, formed a very modest and sufficient covering; the hair fell over the shoulders in long plaits... One handsome girl was lying at full length on the burning marble pavement in an attitude of such exquisite grace that we stopped in admiration. The charm of the picture was wonderfully heightened by the broad stripes of wet silk wrapper, her cornelian necklace, and bright blue bangles, as with one slender hand lightly supporting her head, her dark hair fell back in a stream of glistening ripples."

FROM MRS WALKER'S 'EASTERN LIFE AND SCENERY', 1886

Mrs Walker gave lessons in art at a Turkish girls' school in Sultanahmet, Istanbul, and painted portraits of royal ladies in the harem

"The bath attendant takes the wrapper and washes it quickly, then throws it up high onto a line. Lines are strung at a great height, as if in the dome of a church. To throw it so high and make it hang neatly takes unbelievable skill. They are proud of this and like exhibiting their art to customers."

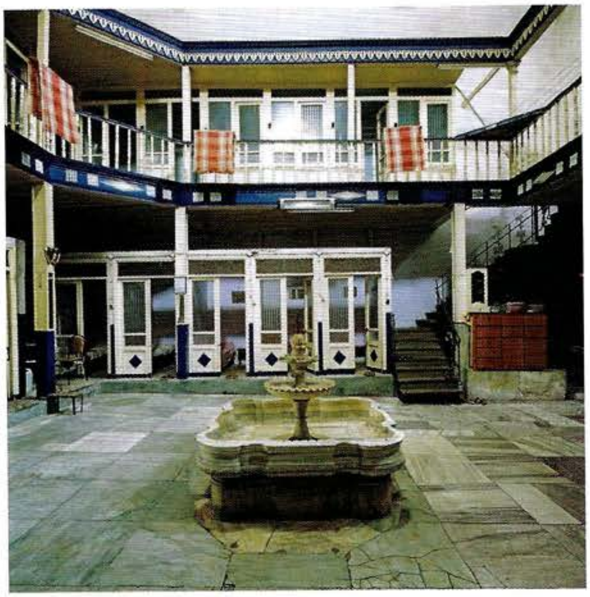
FROM SOLOMON SCHWEIGGER, 'A NEW BOOK OF TRAVELS FROM GERMANY TO CONSTANTINOPLE AND JERUSALEM', 1608

Schweigger (1551–1632), a young Protestant clergyman, joined the Emperor Maximilian's envoy to Istanbul in 1577. He went on to translate the Koran into German

The Çinili Hammam

BARBAROSSA'S BATHS

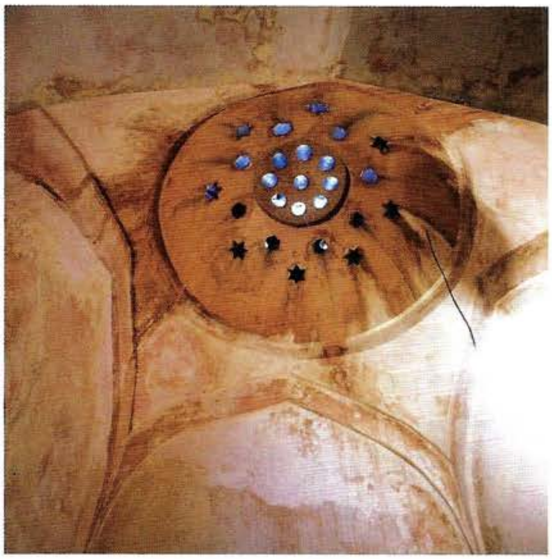
Another masterpiece by the imperial architect Sinan, the Çinili Hammam in the Old City of Istanbul was built for the legendary corsair-turned-admiral Barbaros Hayrettin Pasha, or Barbarossa, in the 1540s. Today it is far from grand, and only a few of the tiles that gave it the name Çinili (Tiled) are still in evidence. But nothing can diminish the effect of the soaring curvy arches supporting a series of imposing domes



Above: the *camegâh*, or disrobing hall, of the Çinili Hammam, surrounded on four sides by a gallery of cubicles for changing and resting in after the bath. These would originally have been open, with divans and piles of cushions. At the centre of the hall is a 19th-century *fıskiye*, or fountain, where fruit could be cooled. A range for making coffee and tea stands in one corner

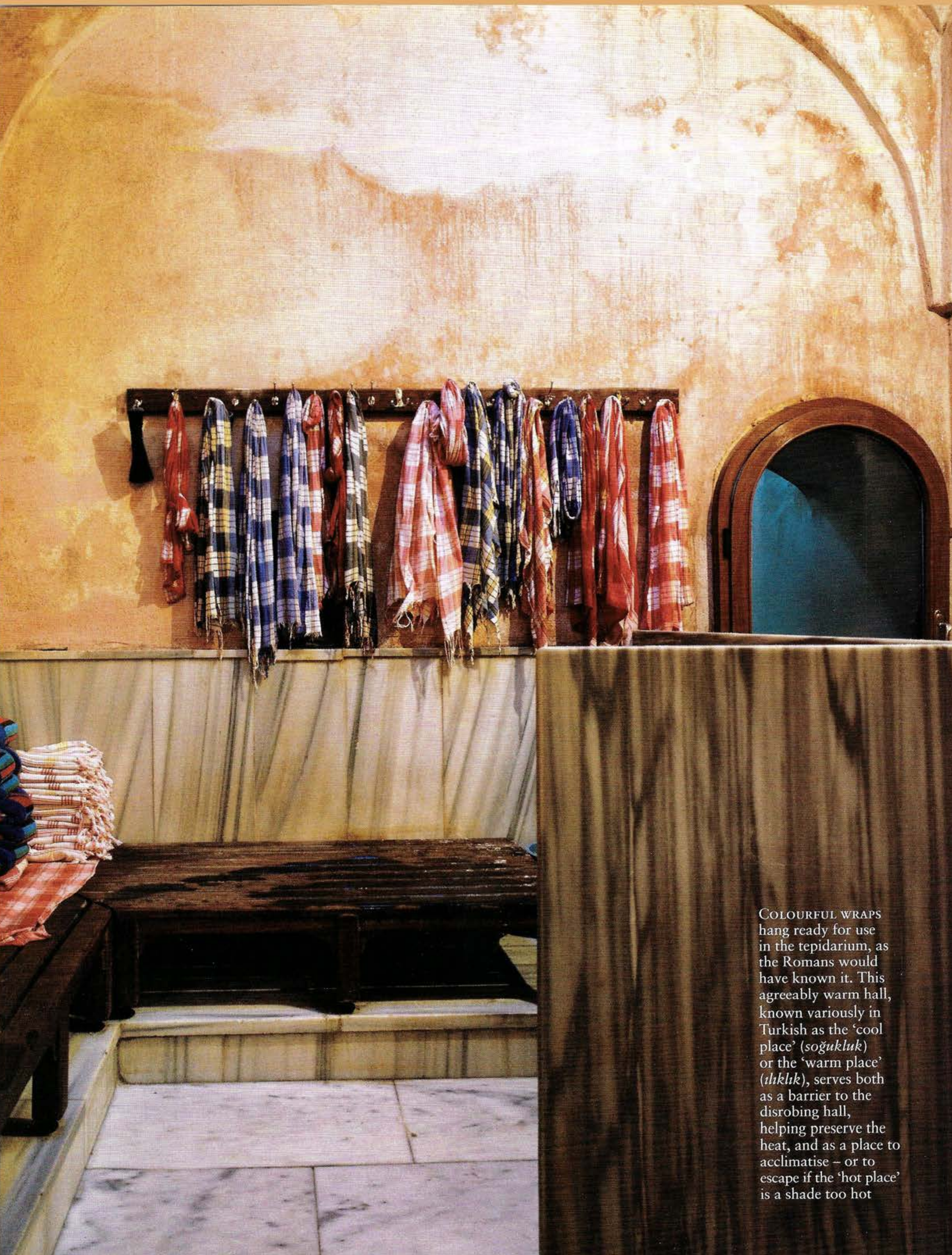
Opposite: even the lavatories, lit from above, have impressive domes, painted with a wash of indigo blue

'TODAY THE BATHS ARE SHABBY, IF PICTURESQUE. GONE IS THE PORTICO THAT SHADED THE ENTRANCES TO THE MEN'S AND WOMEN'S BATHS. BUT INSIDE, SINAN'S DOMES AND GEOMETRY STILL WORK THEIR MAGIC'

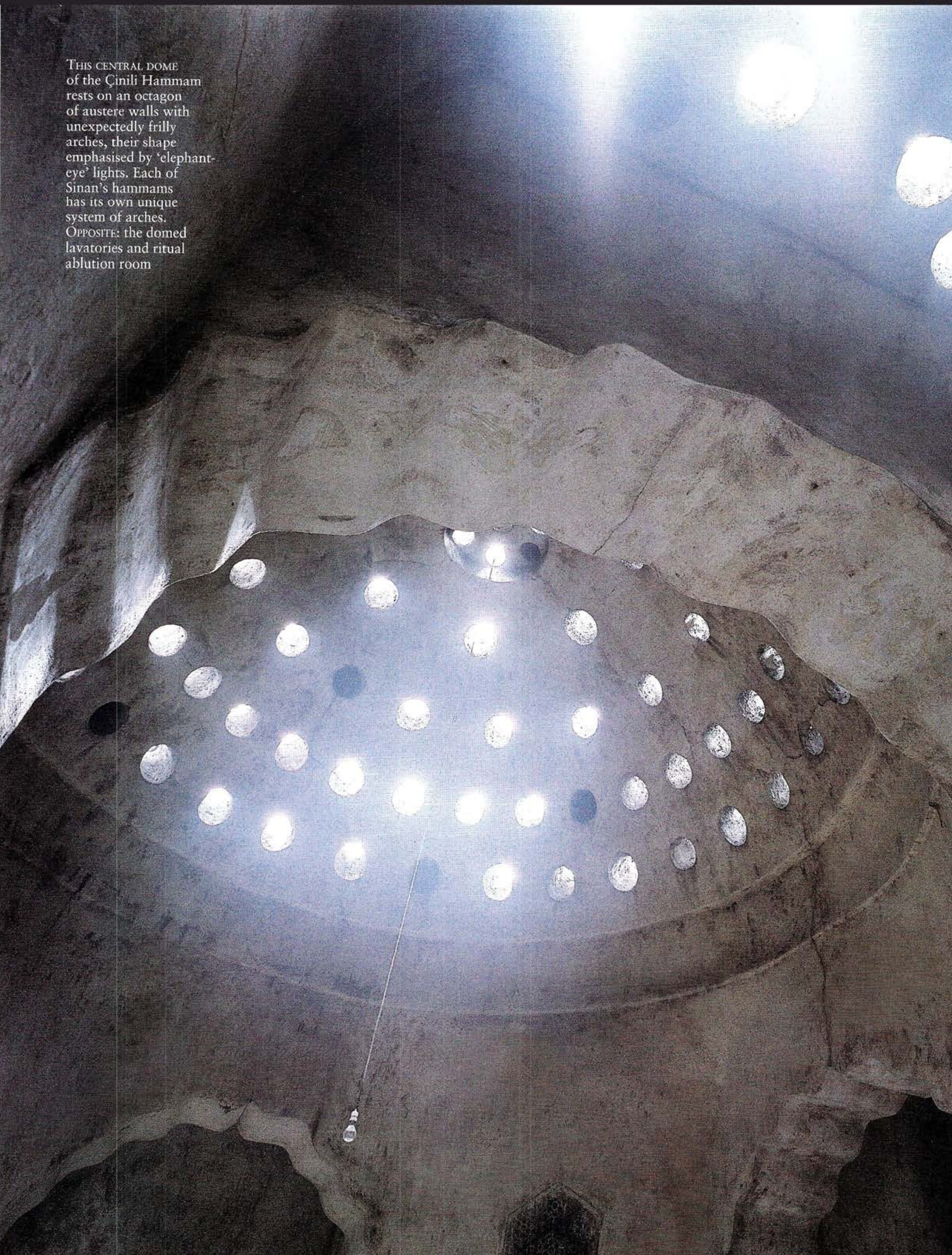


For Charles White, writing in the early 1840s, the "Tchinelly Hammam" was "one of the neatest and most picturesque in the city". Zeyrek, close to the imperial Fatih Mosque and the Valencian Aqueduct, was a fashionable quarter with handsome wooden houses and views to the Golden Horn. Today it is a rough-and-tumble area, whose houses are home to poor immigrants from the east, and the baths are shabby, if picturesque. Gone is the portico that shaded the entrances to the men's and women's baths. In its place butchers hang goats' carcases. But, inside, Sinan's domes and geometry still work their magic. Çinili is above all an architect's hammam, and a light hand could restore it to perfection.

Sinan built the baths in the 1540s for Barbaros Hayrettin Pasha, known to the West as Barbarossa, a former corsair who became the first naval commander to be honoured by the Sultan with the title of Grand Admiral and Governor-General of the Islands. The baths would finance the running of Barbarossa's

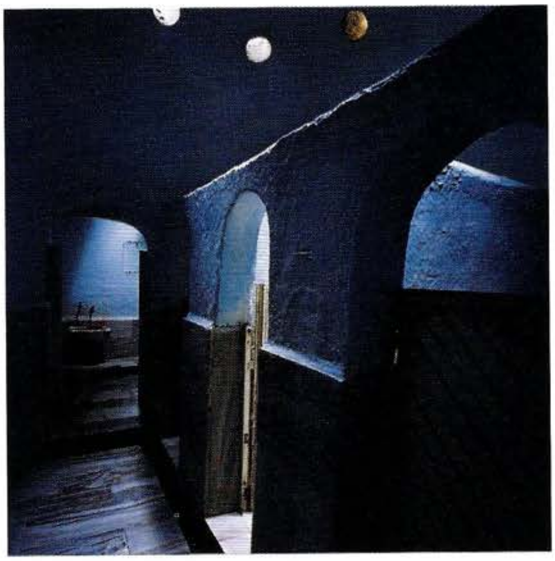


Colourful wraps hang ready for use in the tepidarium, as the Romans would have known it. This agreeably warm hall, known variously in Turkish as the 'cool place' (*soğukluk*) or the 'warm place' (*ılıklık*), serves both as a barrier to the disrobing hall, helping preserve the heat, and as a place to acclimatise – or to escape if the 'hot place' is a shade too hot



THIS CENTRAL DOME of the Çinili Hammam rests on an octagon of austere walls with unexpectedly frilly arches, their shape emphasised by 'elephant-eye' lights. Each of Sinan's hammams has its own unique system of arches. OPPOSITE: the domed lavatories and ritual ablution room

'...A HOT ROOM, MARVELLOUSLY AUSTERE BUT FOR THE DELICATE PIE-CRUST ARCHES THAT SUPPORT THE DOME'

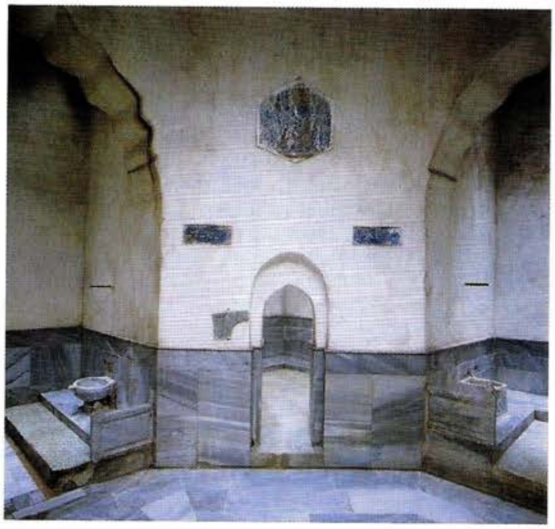


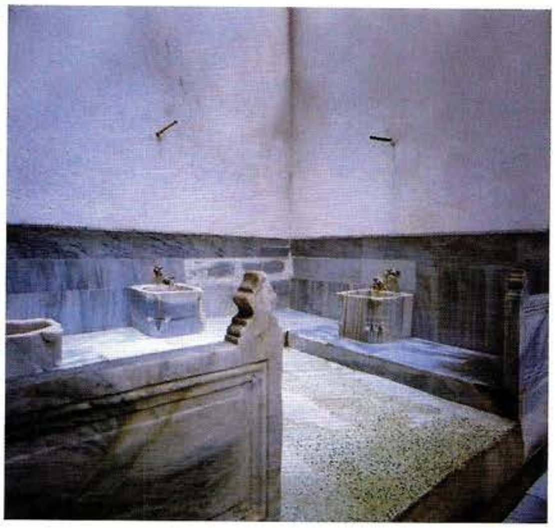
waterside mosque and school in Beşiktaş, where only his pretty mausoleum now survives. The navy was close to Sinan's heart: in winter, while the Janissaries rested, it was the skilled galley slaves who did his building work – many earned their freedom when projects were completed.

In the "hot room", a few of the tiles that gave the hammam its name can still be seen: panels of hexagonal Iznik tiles, their glaze encrusted with lime from dripping whitewash, and a row of tiles inscribed with lines of sensual Persian verse comparing the "beauties" therein to those of paradise. Who knows how many tiles have vanished? Fires in the 18th and 19th centuries took their toll, and for a time the baths served as a warehouse.

The Çinili is a classic double hammam, for men and women. Leading back from the street is a sequence of domed halls, side by side, identical twins that never knew the other existed: first the disrobing halls, then a wide, warm anteroom, and finally a hot room, marvellously austere but for the delicate pie-crust arches that support the dome and vaults. Nearby there was a deep well, filled in long ago, from which the water for the hammam was drawn by horses, whose stables have also long gone. But behind the baths you will still find the chambers of the *külhanbey*, the legendary league of stoker lads.

'...PANELS OF HEXAGONAL IZNIK TILES, THEIR GLAZE ENCRUSTED WITH LIME FROM DRIPPING WHITEWASH, AND A ROW OF TILES INSCRIBED WITH LINES OF SENSUAL PERSIAN VERSE'



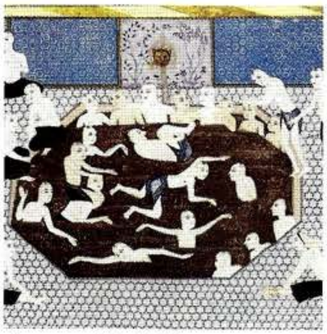


OPPOSITE: relaxing on the hot *göbektaşı*, washed in light from above. Plastic bowls may have replaced copper ones and the walls may have seen better days, but Sinan's geometry remains a triumph: the hexagonal podium is encircled with an octagon of arched *eyvans* (side chambers) alternating with plain walls, while the cruciform plan creates private corner rooms (TOP) and deep niches for washing in, complete with carved armrests like those of divans (ABOVE)

First-hand Accounts

How the fellows take baths

On a visit to the Çinili Hammam in the 1840s, little escapes Charles White's eagle eye



Above: A men's hammam in the early 17th century. Pools were confined to thermal spas

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This excerpt is from the third and last volume of Charles White's Three Years in Constantinople, or Domestic Manners of the Turks in 1844, *published in 1846. White's observations are the most detailed and unromanticised of the time. He probably owed his accuracy to friendships made in Istanbul, notably with Ahmet Vefik Pasha, politician, diplomat and translator of Voltaire. White went on to be the Brussels correspondent of* The Daily Telegraph.

Let us at once enter the Tchinelly Hammam, observing, by the way, that the description of one bath will serve for that of all others as, although they may differ in size, architectural elegance and luxury, they are all constructed upon the same plan. The system of treatment is also identical, excepting, perhaps, in the number and adroitness of attendants, and the price, which secures some baths from being invaded by the lower orders.

All great hammans, whether double or single, that is, whether containing one set of rooms open to both sexes at different hours, or on different days, or divided into two distinct sets, approached by opposite entrances, contain three apartments. The first, or outer chamber, consists of an oblong square, surmounted by a lofty dome, which, as well as the upper portion of the side walls, is provided with windows, admitting abundant light, but secured from outward inspection by a brick screen, and thence the chamber is called *djamakeean* (the glazed). The floor is paved with marble, and in the centre is a neatly sculptured *fisskaya* (fountain), or *havooz* (basin)...

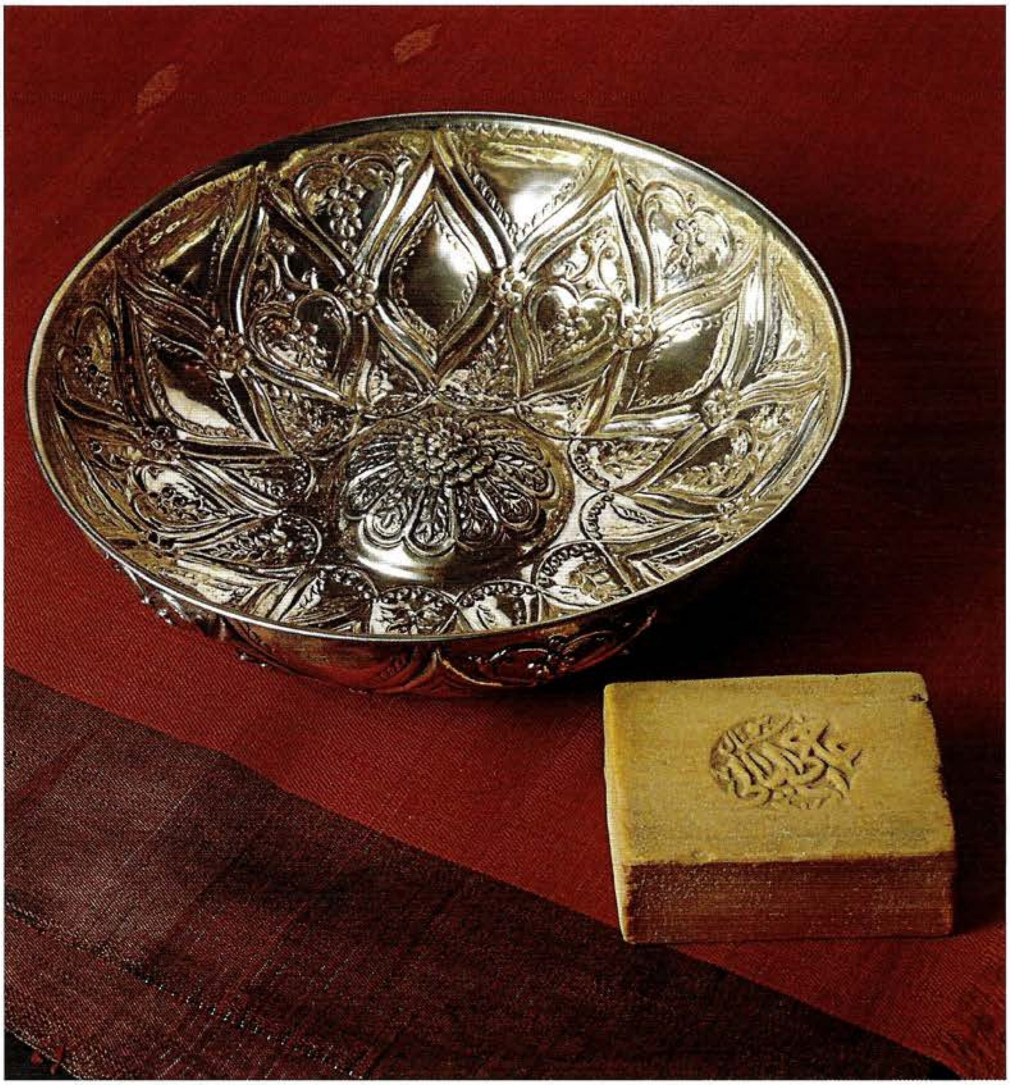
Elevated stages (*setler*), provided with numerous couches or camp beds (*yatak*), occupy the sides of the walls. Above these is a gallery supported by wooden or marble columns, similarly fashioned. The *yatak* are covered with cushions and mattresses, where bathers undress and leave their garments, and subsequently repose, smoke, refresh themselves, and re-dress. The entrance-door is screened outside by a cloth curtain. Contiguous to this, in the inside is a raised gallery, occupied by the *hammamjee* (superintendent). This personage is generally a respectable servant or agent of the *Wakoofs*, to which almost all baths are affiliated. He maintains order among bathers and attendants, and generally takes under his charge watches, purses and valuables. The *hammamjee* is assisted by an *oosta* (head waiter), who receives the money, and superintends the general service.

The *djamakeean* is also furnished with wooden seates placed in front of the raised platforms. Here those who cannot be immediately accommodated with *yatak* await their turn. It also contains a buffet filled with cups, glasses, and bowls, a stove for preparing coffee, and several wicker baskets with charcoal heaters, for drying linen.

A *kahvejee* and *sherbetjee* are added to the establishment. They supply coffee, pipes, *narguillas*, lemonade, fresh water, fruit, sweetmeats, or any other refreshments that may be called for after bathing. The operative attendants consist of two or four *soopourgedjee* (sweepers), whose business it is to clear away impurities, and several *telak* (bath-men)... The *telak* are always in sufficient number to insure prompt and regular attendance, and relieve each other twice or thrice daily. They wear no other garments, while on duty, than a small fez, a pair of *naélin*, and a *peshtamel* of red or blue striped cotton, which latter, being wound round the loins, serves as a petticoat or apron.

When a bather enters, he makes his salutation to the *hammamjee*, and is conducted to one of the *yatak*, which are always covered with a clean *tcharsaf* (square sheet). Here he undresses, and if he be not provided with his own bathing attire, he receives two coloured *peshtamel*, which are drawn round his waist, and cover the whole person downwards. He is then presented with a pair of *naélin*, and, descending from the platform, is conducted by a *telak*, into the first vapour-room, called *saooklook* (the cool place), the heat of which, nevertheless, appears insupportable to a novice. Here he rests some seconds, and begins to feel the effect of the temperature, generally 110° of Fahrenheit. After some ten minutes' preparatory perspiration, he rises and follows the *telak* into the *sidjaklik* (hot place), where the heat, from 125° to 130° of Fahrenheit, is extremely oppressive on first entering, and the perspiration profuse.

The apartment, as well as the "cool place", is surmounted by a dome, studded with convex glass lenses, to admit light, and perforated with holes, in which tin tubes are adapted, to carry off a portion of the vapour. The floors are paved with marble, slightly inclined towards the centre, so as to allow the water to run off. Upon the sides of the walls are several semicircular and neatly sculpted *koorna* (fountains), each provided with two brass *mooslook* (cocks); the one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supplying cold, and the other hot water. The middle of this "hot place" is occupied by a broad marble slab (*gubek tashy*), raised about two feet from the floor. Upon this bathers are laid, and undergo the process of maceration or shampooing to any extent required; that is, simple friction, or rolling, kneading, cracking the joints, in a manner sometimes painful, never satisfactory, though perhaps always healthy.

Having submitted to this process, called *oomak*, the patient rises, and takes possession of a wooden settle raised about four inches from the pavement, and placed near one of the lateral fountains. Here he finds a small brass *tass* (cup), which he repeatedly fills from the semi-circular *koorna* at his elbow, and throws the contents over his head and shoulders....

When the bather has reposed awhile, the *telak* approaches and proceeds to rub him with coarse *hammam kissessy* (bathing gloves or bags). This is done with such dexterity that the operator peels off and throws upon the pavement long rolls of the epidermis, in such quantities as to impress novices with an idea that baker's dough has been spread on the gloves. This operation

What other writers had to say ...about men's hammams

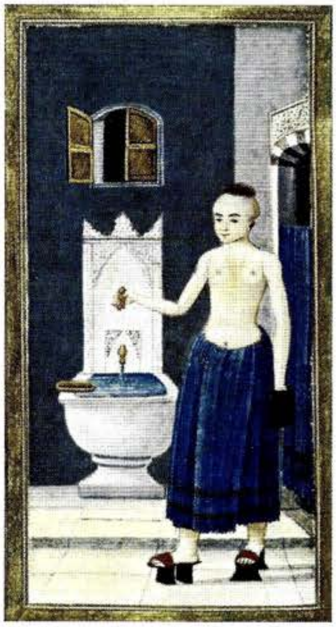
"Hungry and exhausted after 14 hours' riding, cold to the bone, all my limbs shaking with ague, I dismounted in front of the caravansaray... Someone suggested a hammam... The whole body is scrubbed and all the muscles stretched and folded. Sometimes we had to laugh out loud, but in the end, all the pain of a long wearisome ride was gone... This is certainly a thorough cleansing... you may say you had never washed until you had a Turkish bath."

HELMUT VON MOLTKE,
'LETTERS ON CONDITIONS AND EVENTS IN TURKEY, 1835–39'
A future chief of the Prussian army, Count Helmut von Moltke served Mahmud II as a captain in the Ottoman army in his early thirties

"Around the disrobing room are sofas where one rests and smokes a pipe and drinks coffee and sorbet, leaves himself to the very comfortable state of doing nothingness, free from worry, which the Italians would call *il dolce far niente* and the Turk with only one meaningful word, *keif*."

FROM BARON JOSEPH VON HAMMER-PURGSTALL,
'AN OVERVIEW OF A JOURNEY TO CONSTANTINOPLE...'
Appointed to a position in the Austrian embassy in Constantinople in 1799, von Hammer went on to become a notable translator and Orientalist

ABOVE LEFT: A 19TH-CENTURY EMBOSSED SILVER 'TAS', OR HAMMAM BOWL, AND A BAR OF OLIVE-OIL SOAP



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AN 18TH-CENTURY 'TELLAK', OR HAMMAM ATTENDANT, WEARING A BLUE 'PEŞTEMAL' AND WIELDING A BLACK GOAT'S-HAIR 'KESE' WITH WHICH TO SCRUB CUSTOMERS

being terminated, the *telak* brings, if required, a basin of perfumed soap lather, with which he rubs the body, dashing off the suds with hot water from the *koorna* – a pleasing process. He will also supply some of the perfumed *kil* (paste), used by ladies for cleaning their hair and composed of argillaceous earth, mixed with pounded roses and violets. The body being thus sufficiently macerated, divested of all extraneous matter, and purified by the most profuse perspiration, the patient, for such he must be, rises and returns to the *saooklook*, where he seats himself.

Being thus divested of his *peshtamel*, he is enveloped in three linen wrappers. One of these, termed *havloo*, is coiled round the head; a second, also called *havloo*, is thrown over his chest and shoulders; and a third, a *siledjik* (the cleaner), is wound round the loins, and hangs to the ground. A considerable difference is now experienced in the temperature, and the flow of perspiration diminishes. Presently, the attendant warns him that it is time to return to the vestiary, where, on first entering, the bather feels a sensation of cold. But he has not long taken possession of his couch, and been supplied with fresh wrappers, and also with *makhrama* (hand towels), before he again breaks out into a profuse but agreeable perspiration. This, however, subsides gradually and with the aid of coffee, pipe and sherbet, he sinks into a most voluptuous state of dreamy repose and complacent *keif*, which he continues to enjoy as long as it suits his inclination.

After an hour thus passed in pleasing meditation, and under impulse of good will and benevolence towards all men, the purified individual dresses and departs. This may be done without the necessity of swathing up in cloaks or warm clothing, even in severe weather. Colds are rarely caught, unless one has to cross the harbour while still under the influence of the bath; then the sharp winds and inaction require warm covering. Otherwise, the gradual transition from the "hot" to the "cool place", and thence to the *djamakeean*, acts as a safeguard against subsequent exposure to outward atmosphere. The whole process occupies about two hours; and the cost, exclusive of refreshments, is about five piastres, with a trifle for the *oosta*. If sherbert, coffee, and pipes be supplied, ten piastres, including *baksish*, is ample payment. *Baksish*, paid by rich natives, generally doubles the expense of a bath; but this is diminished, when families join and occupy the same fountain...

Turks and Armenians of the better classes are always liberal in their fees, and on certain occasions the *baksish* is doubled; for instance, at Beiram [Muslim religious holiday], upon marriage, and when ladies bathe after confinement. Christians also double their donations at Easter, New Year, and Christmas. Attendants take care to remind them of these festivals, by presenting them with an orange or a plate of sugar-plums.

In addition to the operations performed upon European bathers, Turks demand other services. Those who only wear the long tuft of hair at the summit of the crown, require this to be unplaited, cleansed and readjusted. It is necessary for them to epilate the person...by the application of corrosive paste....

The principal drawback on Turkish baths is the necessity of submitting to the various operations in such numerous and mixed company. But this inconvenience is mostly ideal, as each individual occupies himself exclusively with his own ablutions, and would consider culpable of extreme indecorum were he to observe others. The utmost order and decency is maintained at all times, and unless some noisy young Greeks be present, not a voice is heard. When ladies bathe, the case is different. The sounds of their merriment may often be heard in the streets...

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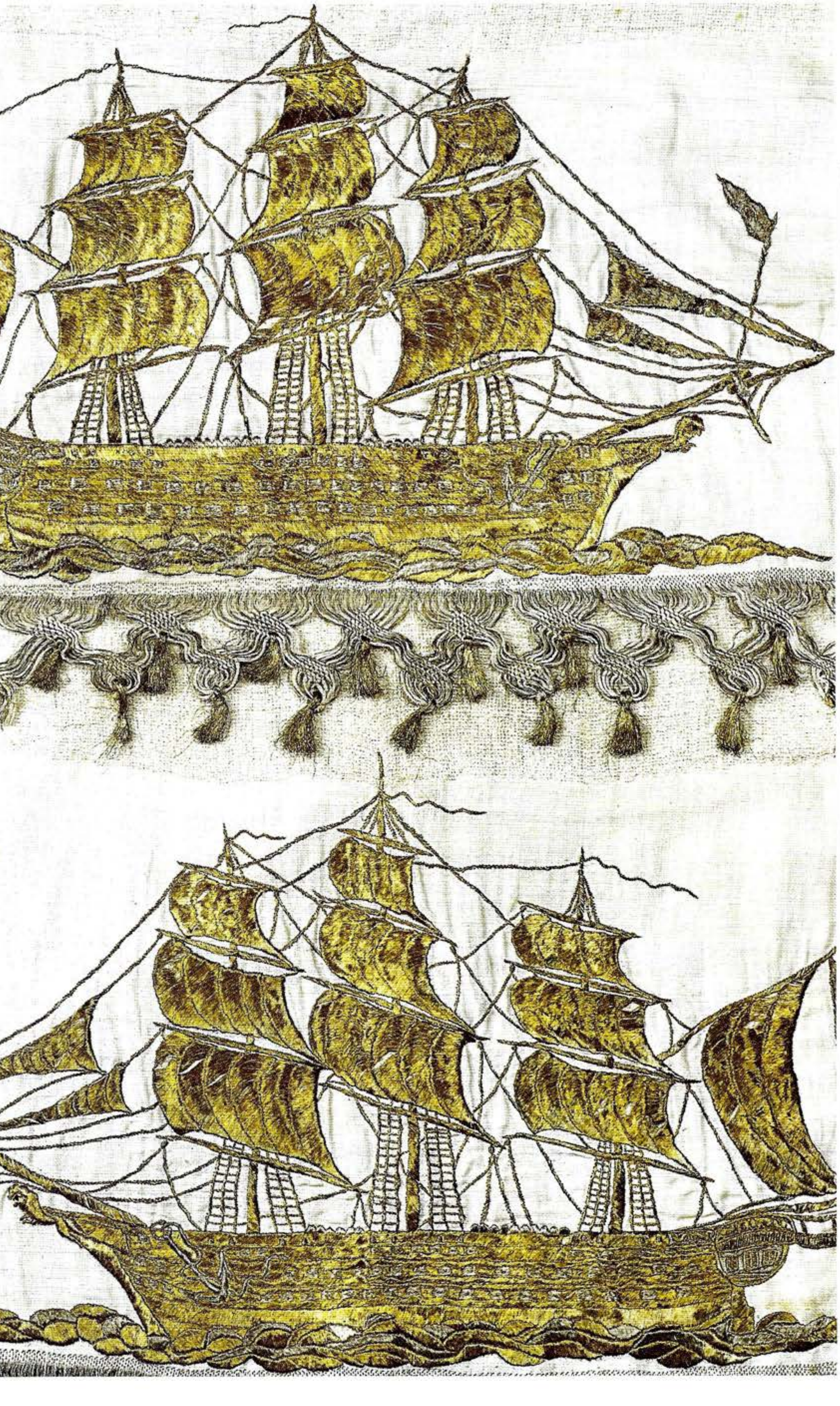


What another writer had to say ...about the beauty of Turkish towels

"Some women returning from the water were enveloped in the *burnous*, or in the bathing *takim*, or set, consisting of a large wrap folded round the waist and falling below the knees, a smaller one covering the shoulders, and a third winding round the head like a fantastic turban...

These towels, when of a superior kind, are expensive, even at Broussa [Bursa], costing as much as thirty piastres, or about 5s. the pair – they are always sold in pairs – but the quality is immeasurably superior to any of the imitations made in England, which utterly fail in the soft, spongy, absorbent texture that forms the great charm of the genuine fabric."

FROM MRS WALKER'S 'EASTERN LIFE AND SCENERY', 1886

"Leila Hanum, the Pasha's second daughter, seated in a quiet corner with her frame, is at work upon a towel of Broussa stuff which she embroiders in gold at either end as a present for her papa..."

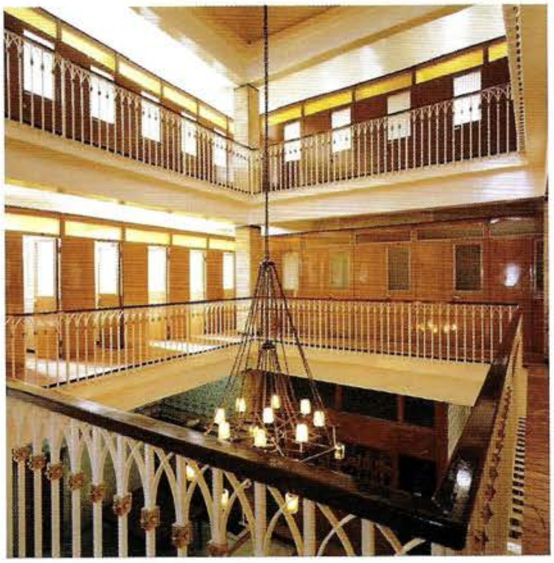
FROM 'EASTERN LIFE AND SCENERY'

LEFT: 19TH-CENTURY COTTON HAND-TOWEL EMBROIDERED WITH A GALLEON AT EITHER END IN GOLD AND SILVER THREAD

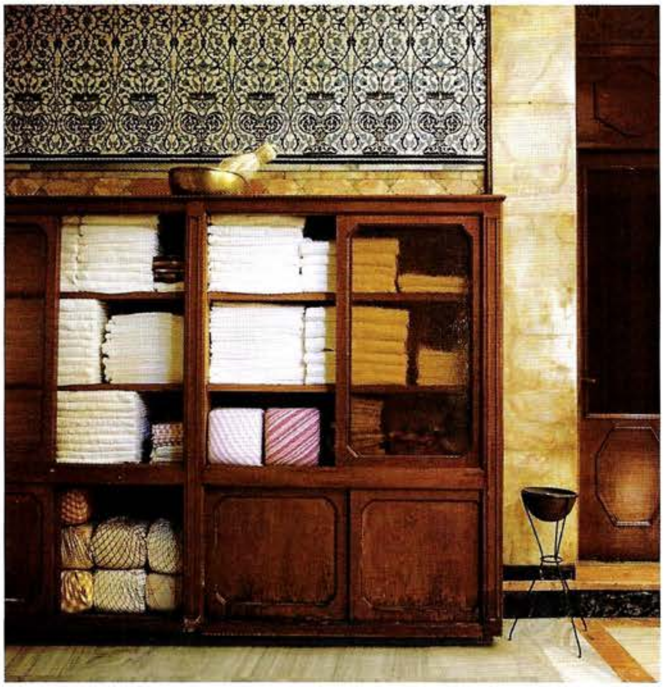
GALATASARAY HAMMAM

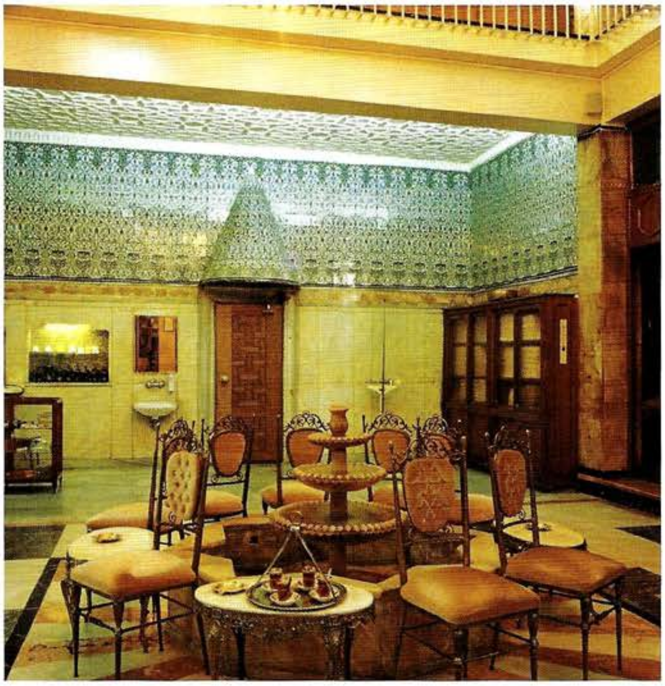
STAR TREATMENT

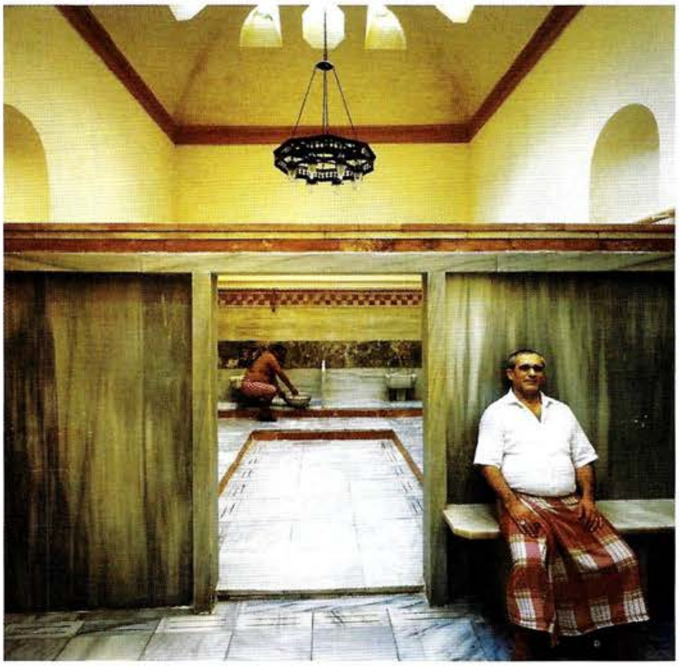
BUILT IN 1715 TO SERVE A PALACE SCHOOL, THE GALATASARAY HAMMAM, IN THE HEART OF THE EUROPEAN QUARTER, HAS ALWAYS CATERED TO A BETTER CLASS OF BATHER. TRAINEE DIPLOMATS STEAMED THERE, AND STRANDED GENTLEMEN WHILED AWAY THE NIGHT. THEN IN THE SIXTIES IT WAS GIVEN A MAKEOVER AND BECAME THE HAUNT OF CELEBRITIES AND SPIES. TODAY IT RETAINS ITS AIR OF GLAMOUR AND EXCLUSIVITY



ABOVE: tiers of brightly lit dressing rooms surround the disrobing hall of the Galatasaray Hammam. In the old days, before the baths were revamped, those who missed the last boat home would often stay the night. OPPOSITE: the elegant dome of the hot room







The Galatasaray Hammam, off Istiklâl Caddesi, in the European quarter, has long had the air of a gentleman's club. The *İstanbul Ansiklopedisi* – a goldmine of historical gossip abandoned in 1973 – describes it as a handy place for the *efendi* class to spend the early hours of the morning if they missed the last boat home after an evening's drinking and other amusements. But not everyone who stayed enjoyed a good night's sleep. The old Istanbul writer Ahmet Rasim recalls "the clatter of clogs, the squeaking door hinges, all the shouting and the clapping, the *kahveci*'s sudden call that a coffee was ready, the noisy thanks of attendants receiving a tip, the laughing arrival of the last customers to emerge from the bars, the snoring from other cubicles". He concludes: "I was just about to fall asleep when they shouted 'time's up, the women are coming' and kicked us out."

The hammam's history goes back to 1498, when Beyazıd II built a preparatory school for bright Balkan children destined for the ultimate hothouse of Ottoman education, the Topkapı Palace school. Both the palace school and the baths serving them were later abandoned, but a new hammam – the present one – was built on the

foundations of the old in 1715, when Ahmet III revived the school in what was still virtually countryside. The association of the school with the baths continued when the school reopened its doors as the Galatasaray Lycée in the mid-19th century and became Turkey's school for diplomats. It had its own private entrance until the 1960s, and there were certain hours, usually early in the morning, when the hammam was reserved strictly for students. It was still a regular haunt of Turkish diplomats well into the 1980s.

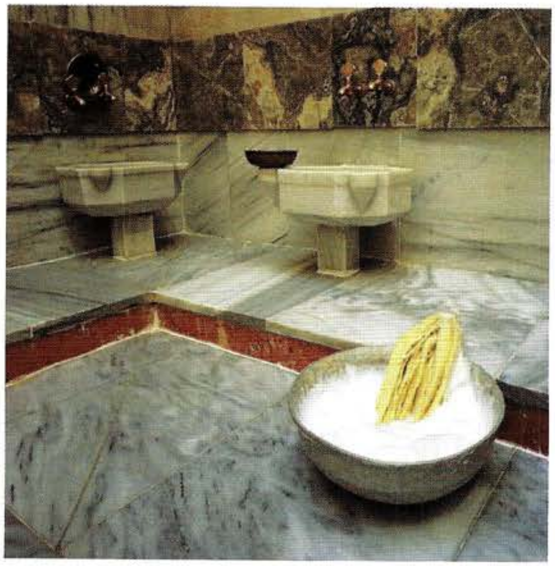
In 1965 the hammam was overhauled at great expense, and women's baths were added. At the end of the reception held for the grand reopening, at the invitation of the owner, most of the guests undressed and had a steam. Word went out that entrance was free, and passers-by promptly joined in. The Ministry of Tourism even had to invent a new category for Galatasaray: the luxury hammam. Celebrities were quick to embrace it: the magazine *Hayat* was awash with tittle-tattle about visiting stars: Johnny Halliday swathed in towels like Lawrence of Arabia; the French chanteur Adamo being soaped down by a *dansöz*; Tony Curtis emerging in pristine white top and slacks.

Today natural gas has replaced coal, but

ABOVE: *bohças*, the distinctive bundles of towels kept by regulars. OPPOSITE (CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT): the linen cupboard stacked with towels – each client needs at least six; the disrobing hall, with its hooded doorway; the *hamamcı*, or master of ceremonies, cools off in the tepidarium; the room's vaulted ceiling

certain traditions are kept alive. The *hamamcı* (master of ceremonies) descends from a long line of *hamamcı* and hails from Sivas province, their customary home. The chief bath attendant, or *tellak*, still weaves palm fibres from the Spice Bazaar into the bundles for lathering soap. And, as with most hammams, the front door, down a narrow street off Istiklâl Caddesi, remains unprepossessing.

But, inside, the place is spruce and well-managed. There are tiers of brightly lit cubicles. A hooded door to catch heat escaping from the hammam and vent it back inside leads into a tepidarium and hot room, both well illuminated and lined with a frieze of coral-pink porphyry and white marble. The dome, though not especially high, is handsome and pierced with the usual elephant-eye skylights. The Galatasaray may lack the mysterious recesses of Istanbul's other grand hammams, but it is delightfully steamy and atmospheric all the same.



THE HOT ROOM: the heated marble platform, or *göbektaşı*. TOP LEFT: a corner with old marble basins and, above it, a more recent checked border. LEFT: a *lif* made of palm fibres in hot suds, ready for a scrub

FIRST-HAND ACCOUNTS

Miss Pardoe has the vapours

THE STRAIGHT-LACED JULIA PARDOE EXPLORES A HAMMAM IN THE 'CITY OF THE SULTAN'

SADBERK HANIM MUSEUM

A LINEN HAMMAM TOWEL WITH AN EBONY QAJAR DOUBLE-SIDED COMB AND A SILK 'KESE' (MITT) FOR DELICATE COMPLEXIONS

Daughter of an English officer, the novelist Julia Pardoe (1804–62), usually known simply as Miss Pardoe, was taken to the Mediterranean for her health. This excerpt is from her first book on Turkey, The City of the Sultan: Domestic Manners of the Turks, *in 1836, published nine years before Charles White's book. Her city, often considered a little too sugared, nevertheless reveals a woman's world closed to White, who could only comment on the merriment of the women's baths overheard in the street. These were primmer days than those of Lady Mary, whose delight in 'unnecessary and wanton exposure' clearly irked Miss Pardoe*

Having passed through a small entrance-court, we entered an extensive hall, paved with white marble, and surrounded by a double tier of projecting galleries, supported by pillars: the lower range being raised about three feet from the floor. These galleries were covered with rich carpets, or mattresses, overlaid with chintz or crimson shag, and crowded with cushions; the spaces between the pillars were slightly partitioned off to the height of a few inches; and, when we entered, the whole of the boxes, if I may so call them, were occupied, save the one which had been reserved for us.

In the centre of the hall, a large and handsome fountain of white marble, pouring its waters into four ample scallop shells, whence they fell again into a large basin with the prettiest and most soothing sound imaginable, was surrounded by four sofas of the same material, on one of which, a young and lovely woman, lay pillowed on several costly shawls, nursing her infant.

When I had established myself comfortably among my cushions, I found plenty of amusement for the first half hour in looking about me; and a more singular scene I never beheld. On the left hand of the door of entrance, sat the proprietress of the baths, a beautiful woman of about forty, in a dark turban, and a straight dress of flowered cotton, girt round the waist with a cachemire shawl; her chemisette of silk gauze was richly trimmed; her gold snuff-box lay on the sofa beside her; her amber-headed pipe rested against a cushion and she was amusing herself by winding silk from a small ebony distaff, and taking a prominent part in the conversation; while immediately behind her squatted a negro slave-girl of twelve or thirteen years of age, grinning from ear to ear, and rolling the whites of her large eyes in ecstasy at all that was going forward.

The boxes presented the oddest appearance in the world: some of the ladies had returned from the bathing-hall, and were reclining luxuriously upon their sofas, rolled from head to foot in fine white linen, in many instances embroidered and fringed with gold, with their fine hair falling about their shoulders, which their slaves, not quite so closely covered as their mistresses, were drying, combing, perfuming, and plaiting, with the greatest care. Others were preparing for the bath, and laying aside their dresses, or rather suffering them to be laid aside, for few of them extended a hand to assist themselves while the latest comers were removing their *yashmacs* and cloaks, and exchanging greetings with their acquaintance.

As I had previously resolved to visit every part of the establishment... I exchanged my morning dress for a linen wrapper, and loosened my hair: and then, conducted by the Greek waiting-maid who had accompanied me, I walked barefooted across the cold marble floor to a door at the opposite extremity of the hall, and, on crossing the threshold, found myself in the cooling-room, where groups of ladies were sitting, or lying listlessly on their sofas, enveloped in their white linen wrappers, or preparing for their return to the colder region whence I had just made my escape.

This second room was filled with hot air, to me, indeed, most oppressively so; but I soon discovered that it was, nevertheless, a cooling-room; when, after having traversed it, and dipped my feet some half dozen times in the little channels of warm water that intersected the floor, I entered the great bathing-place of the establishment the extensive octagon hall in which all those who do not chose, or who cannot afford, to pay for a separate apartment, avail themselves, as they find opportunities, of the eight fountains which it contains.

For the first few moments, I was bewildered; the heavy, dense, sulphureous vapour that filled the place, and almost suffocated me; the wild, shrill cries of the slaves pealing through the reverberating domes of the bathing-halls, enough to awaken the very marble with which they were lined; the subdued laughter and whispered conversation of their mistresses murmuring along in an under-current of sound; the sight of nearly three hundred women only partially dressed, and that in fine linen so perfectly saturated with vapour, that it revealed the whole outline of the figure; the busy slaves, passing and repassing, naked from the waist upwards, and with their arms folded upon their bosoms, balancing on their heads piles of fringed or embroidered napkins; groups of lovely girls, laughing, chatting, and refreshing themselves with sweetmeats, sherbet, and lemonade parties of playful children, apparently quite indifferent to the dense atmosphere which made me struggle for breath; and, to crown all, the sudden bursting forth of a chorus of voices into one of the wildest and shrillest of Turkish melodies, that was caught up and flung back by the echoes of the vast hall, making a din worthy of a saturnalia of demons all combined to form a picture, like the illusory semblance of a phantasmagoria, almost leaving me in doubt whether that on which I looked were indeed reality, or the mere creation of a distempered brain.

Beside every fountain knelt, or sat, several ladies, attended by their slaves, in all the various stages of the operation; each intent upon her own arrangements, and regardless of the passers-by; nor did half a dozen of them turn their heads even to look at the English stranger, as we passed on to the small inner cabinet that had been retained for us.

The process of Turkish bathing is tedious, exhausting, and troublesome; I believe that the pretty Greek who attended me spent an hour and a half over my hair alone. The supply of water is immense, and can be heated at the pleasure of the bather, as it falls into the marble basin from two pipes, the one pouring forth a hot, and the other a cold, stream. The marble on which you stand and sit is heated to a degree that you could not support, were the atmosphere less dense and oppressive; and, as the water is poured over you from an embossed silver basin, the feeling of exhaustion becomes almost agreeable. Every lady carries with her all the appliances of the bath, as well as providing her own servant; the inferior ranks alone availing themselves of the services of the bathing women, who, in such cases, supply their employers with every thing requisite...

Having remained in the bath about two hours and a half, I began to sicken for pure air and rest; and, accordingly, winding a napkin with fringed ends about my head, and folding myself in my wrapper, I hastily and imprudently traversed the cooling-room, now crowded with company, looking like a congregation of resuscitated corpses clad in their grave-clothes, and fevered into life; and gained the outer hall, where the napkin was removed from my head, my hair carefully plaited without drying, and enveloped in a painted muslin handkerchief; and myself buried among the soft cushions of the divan.

A new feature had been added to the scene since my departure; most of the ladies were at dinner. The crimson glow of the bath, which throws all the blood into the head, had passed from most of their faces, and was replaced by the pure, pale, peach-like softness of complexion that its constant use never fails to produce. Numbers of negresses were entering with covered dishes, or departing with the reliques of those which had been served up; and, as the Turkish mode of eating lends itself to these pic-nic species of repasts, the fair ladies appeared to be as much at home squatted round their plated or china bowls, spoon in hand, in the hall of the bath, as though they were partaking of its contents in the seclusion of their own harems.

Sherbet, lemonade, *mohalibe*, a species of inferior blanc-manger, and fruit, were constantly handed about for sale; and the scene was altogether so amusing, that it was almost with regret that I folded myself closely in my cloak and veil, and bowed my farewell to the several groups which I passed on my way to the door.

I should be unjust did I not declare that I witnessed none of that unnecessary and wanton exposure described by Lady M W Montague. Either the fair Ambassadress was present at a peculiar ceremony, or the Turkish ladies have become more delicate and fastidious in their ideas of propriety.

The excessive exhaustion which it induces, and the great quantity of time which it consumes, are the only objections that can reasonably be advanced against the use of the Turkish bath...

SADBERK HANIM MUSEUM

An antique linen lady's towel to wrap round the shoulders, and a fine inlaid mirror

What another writer had to say ...about the magic of the hammam

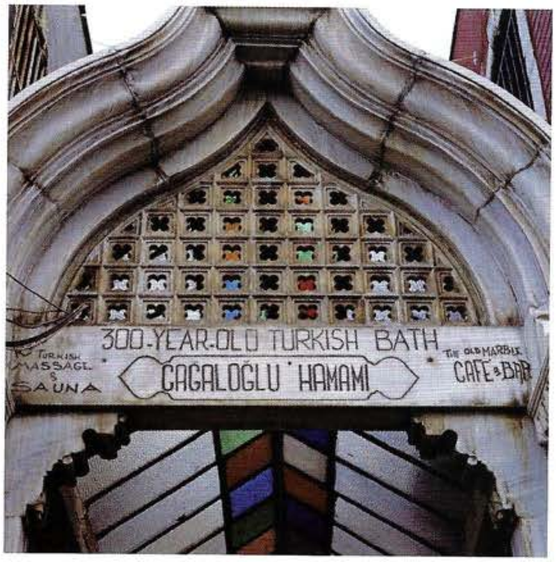
"The hammam was not large, but very beautiful, with two marble kurna sculpted into scallop shells. The spigots were shaped like duck's heads and set in marble scalloped wall pieces. The small disrobing and resting room next to the hammam was entirely clad with marble. On one side of this room was a sedir covered in red silk; a marble cascade fountain opposite, again scallop-shaped, had tiny bowls. Water cascaded into these bowls which grew smaller nearer the top. It was fascinating, especially at night – by candle-light the droplets were like pearls and diamonds."

From Leyla Saz, 'The Imperial Harem of the Sultans', describing a visit to the seaside palace of Fatma Sultan, daughter of Sultan Abdülmecid
Leyla Saz, 1850–1936, was a composer and poet brought up in the harem of Abdülmecid, to whom her father was physician. Her memoir, which was only published in the 1990s, is a unique record of 19th-century palace life

CAĞALOĞLU HAMMAM

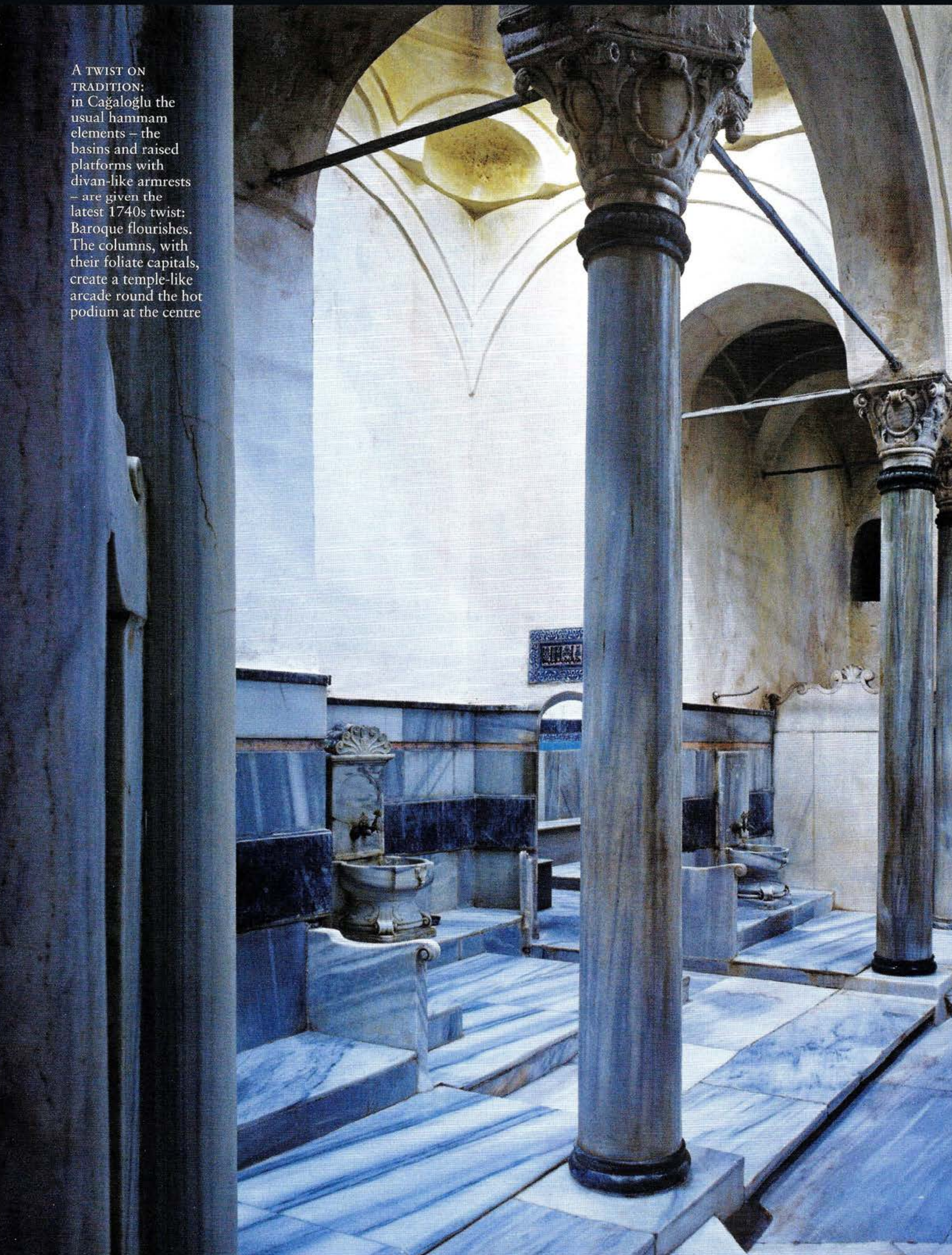
DOME OF BAROQUE

WHEN IT WAS BUILT IN 1741 IN THE NEW BAROQUE STYLE, CAĞALOĞLU WAS AT THE FOREFRONT OF ARCHITECTURAL FASHION. BUT THIS TEMPLE OF CLEANLINESS IN THE OLD CITY MARKS THE DRAMATIC SWANSONG OF THE GRAND OTTOMAN HAMMAM

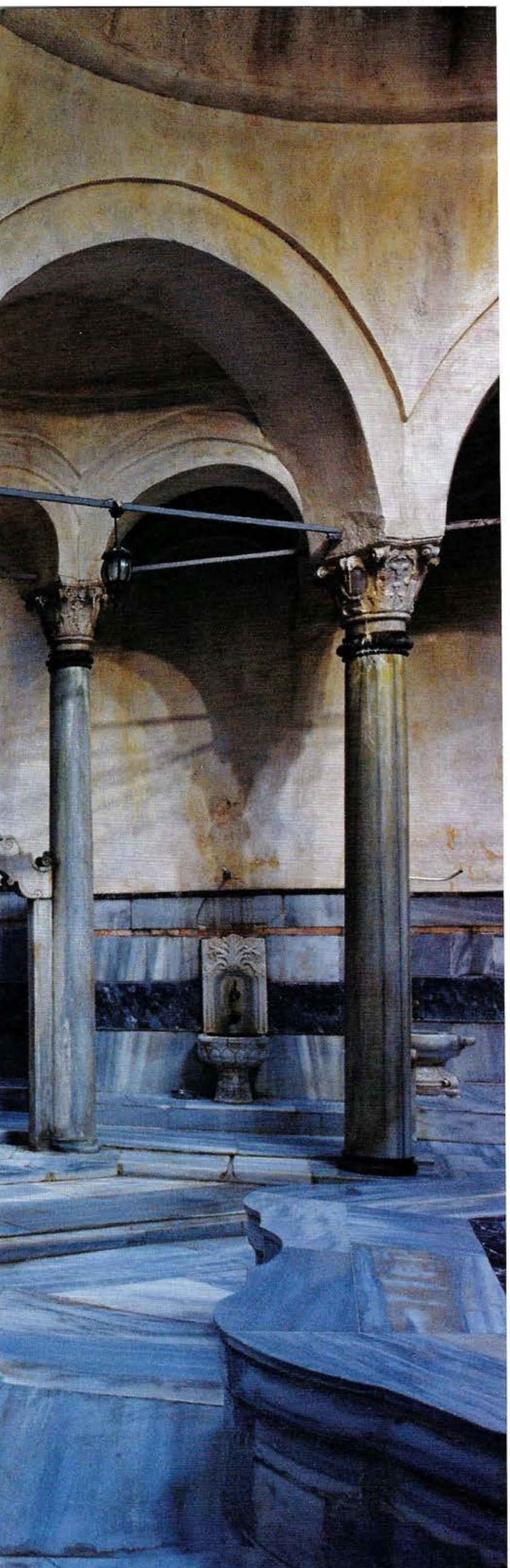

TURKISH MASSAGE & SAUNA
300-YEAR-OLD TURKISH BATH
CAĞALOĞLU HAMAMI
THE OLD MARBLE CAFE & BAR

ABOVE: the improbable 1900s entrance to the Cağaloğlu Hammam – close to the former offices of the Sublime Porte – is part Art Nouveau, part National Revival, with a mishmash of modern lettering

OPPOSITE: the central dome. In the fading light of a cold winter's evening, condensation from the steamy air trickles down the marble columns



A TWIST ON TRADITION: in Cağaloğlu the usual hammam elements – the basins and raised platforms with divan-like armrests – are given the latest 1740s twist: Baroque flourishes. The columns, with their foliate capitals, create a temple-like arcade round the hot podium at the centre



'IN THE DIM, SHIMMERING LIGHT, IT IS CLEAR THE MOOD HAS CHANGED. THE HAMMAN HAS ACQUIRED NEW DRAMA. THE PODIUM HAS WAVY EDGES. CIRCLES OF COLUMNS CREATE A NEW DEPTH'

Cağaloğlu was the last great Ottoman hammam. The intoxicating experience of lying on hot marble in this temple to water and purification, gazing up at its dome through twin circles of ornate capitals, is the perfect climax to a grand hammam tour.

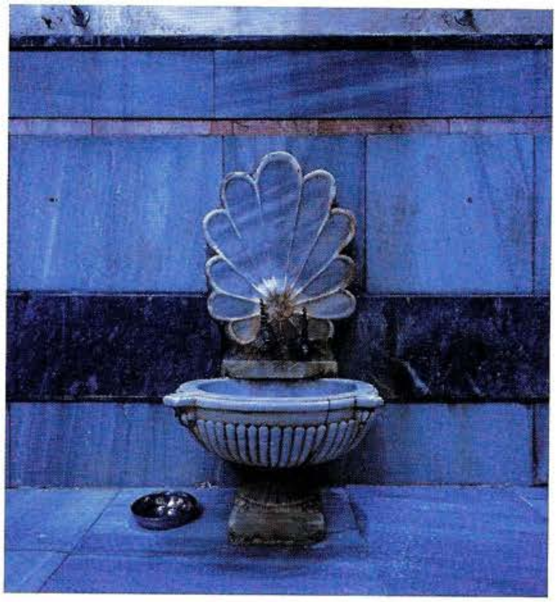
Heroic efforts to increase the supply of water to the city were made in the 18th century, culminating in the astonishing Valide Bendi (Queen Mother's Dam), built in 1797 by the mother of Selim III in the Belgrade Forest, near the Black Sea. It often pours there even when Istanbul is dry. Tunnels and aqueducts linked the dam to Taksim – literally "distribution point", now the city's modern hub. But it was never enough to keep up with the population. District hammams were permitted. Private mansions acquired their own baths, and the palaces at Dolmabahçe and Yıldız would be handsomely plumbed. But huge public double baths for men and women had had their day. They were simply too extravagant.

If Cağaloğlu marks the swansong of the grand hammam, it also ushers in a new era. Nowadays, you often have the baths to yourself, but when they opened in 1741, proximity to the palace and the offices of the Sublime Porte made them hugely popular. Not only was this the Yeni, or New, Hammam (it was still called that a century later), it was also the largest, and built in a completely new manner, perfect for a neighbourhood full of grandees and fine fashionable ladies – the women's half is identical to the men's, even if it is set back discreetly from the street.

Mahmud I built the hammam as an endowment for his new library at Ayasofya. Records of orders for marble survive, as well as of a wages dispute with quarry workers which held things up. The building may now be cluttered with modern tourist tack, but when you are confronted by the bold fountain in the entrance hall and the dome above it, you sense at once the impact the hammam must have had in its heyday.

Cağaloğlu has the classic cruciform plan: a marble podium covered by a large central dome with side chambers branching off. Yet in the dim, shimmering light, it is clear the mood has changed. The hammam has acquired new drama. The podium, no longer a hexagon, now has wavy edges. Inner and outer circles of columns create a new depth; the outer walls are obscured. The

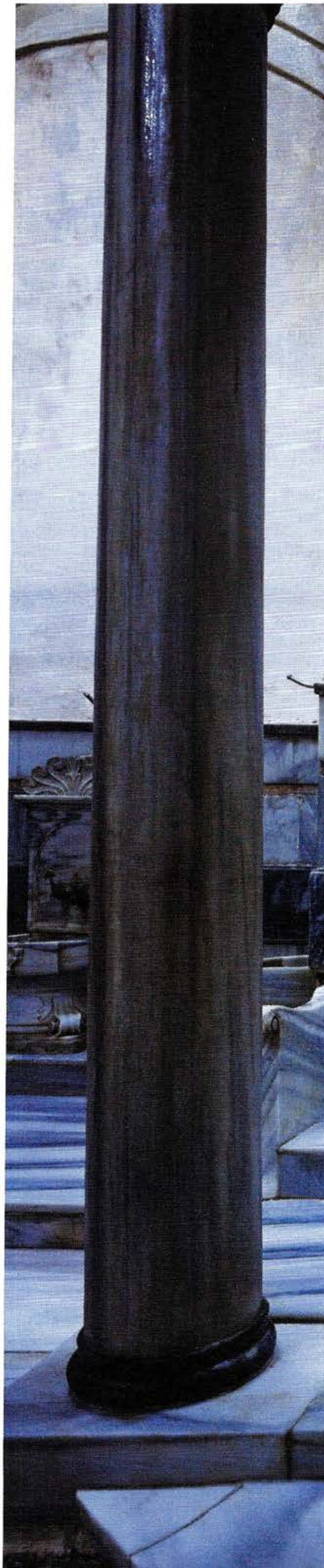
'IN A COURTYARD IS A CAFÉ RUN
BY ORHAN BEY,
A WALKING ENCYCLOPAEDIA. IN WINTER
YOU RETIRE TO A ROOM WITH A
ROARING, SMOKY FIRE'

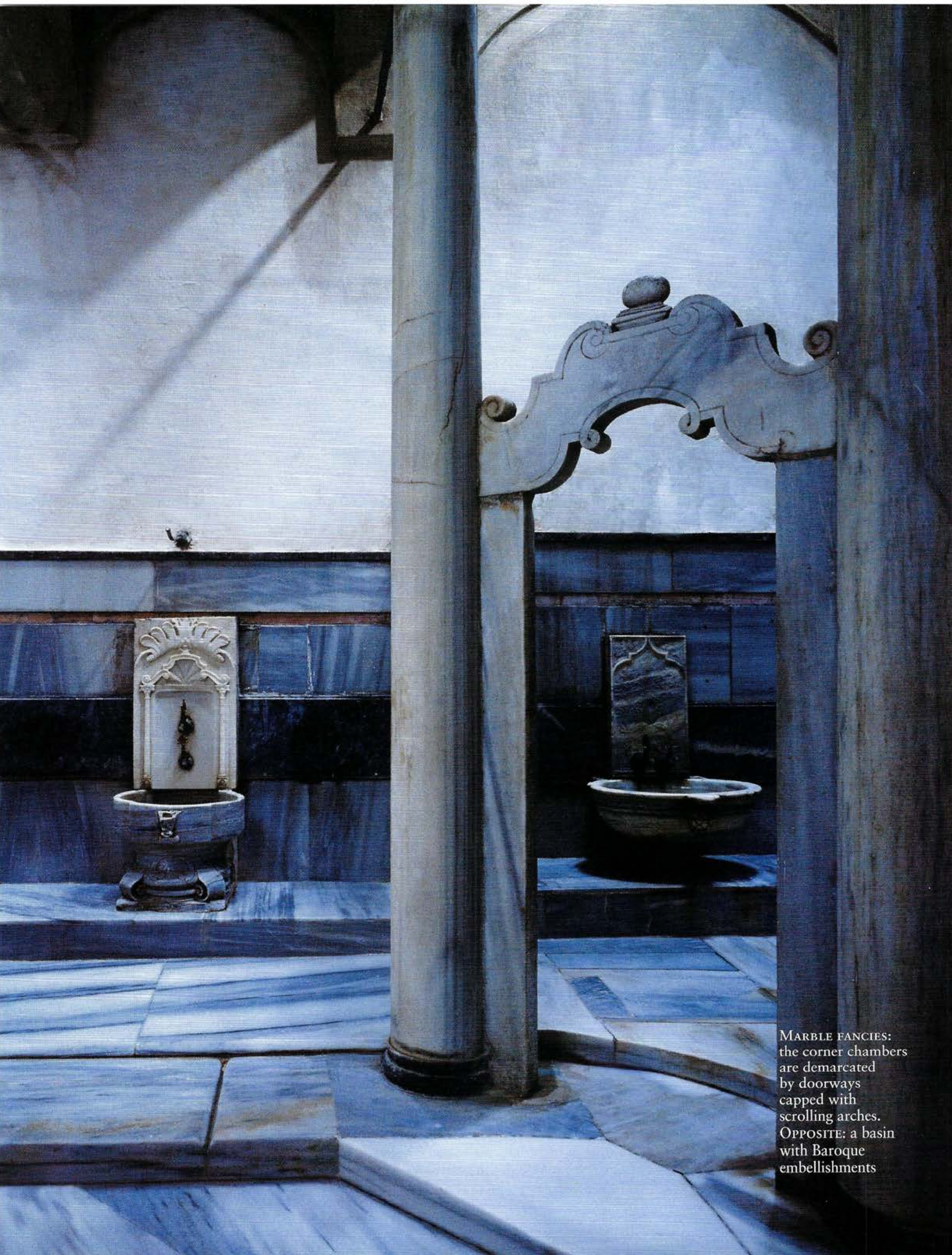


domed side chambers, too, are closer to Roman chapels than to Samarkand eyvans. They have rounded arches, foliate capitals and arched screens with urn-like topknots and scrolls.

The Cağaloğlu changing cabins are solid, if a little dark. A barber works away in one corner; in another, a shop sells good olive-oil soap and *kese* (rough gloves for cleaning the skin). In a courtyard dividing the men's from the women's baths is a café run by Orhan Bey, a walking encyclopaedia, as befits the son of the publisher of the *İstanbul Ansiklopedisi*. In winter you retire to a room with a roaring, smoky fire.

But the most innovative thing about the baths is not what you see but what you don't see. For a hammam to work properly, flames and hot air must gust round the foundations and walls through an ingenious system of vents, completely sealed off to prevent fumes seeping into the rooms. The furnace, or *külhan*, is always at the back. The Çinili Hammam burns coal or wood. Galatasaray has converted to natural gas. In Cağaloğlu, the "lord of the furnace", the *külhanbey*, is now not from Albania, as in the old days, but from Ayvalık, on the Aegean, source of Turkish olive oil. Cağaloğlu does it all with crushed olive pips.





Marble fancies: the corner chambers are demarcated by doorways capped with scrolling arches. Opposite: a basin with Baroque embellishments

TURKISH BATHS IN A NUTSHELL

The ultimate indulgence

FREYA STARK ENJOYED BATHING ON THE BOSPHORUS IN THE 1960S. BUT WHERE CAN YOU BATHE TODAY?

Before stepping back into the cold, real world, spend an hour flat on a couch acclimatising, sipping tea, sage tea (*adaçayı*) or coffee (but never anything cold from the fridge). Baths take time – a reason why they are out of favour with the chattering classes. Most grand hammams, where 25 years ago you could bathe in style, have been hideously renovated, heinously converted into cafés and shopping arcades, or allowed to fall into ruin, making the four hammams featured in this issue all the more precious.

ÇEMBERLİTAŞ
Vezirhan Cad 8,
Çemberlitaş, Istanbul
+90 212 522 7974
cemberlitashamami.com.tr
Well-run, family-owned establishment.

ÇİNİLİ HAMMAM
İtfaiye Cad 46, Zeyrek,
Fatih, Istanbul
+90 212 631 8883
In limbo these days. Go there while there's time.

GALATASARAY
Turnacıbaşı Sok 24,
Galatasaray, Istanbul
+90 (212) 249 9456
galatasarayhamami.com
Solid five-star pampering.

CAĞALOĞLU
Yerebatan Cad 34,
Cağaloğlu, Istanbul
+90 212 522 2424
cagalogluhamami.com.tr
Between Kapalıçarşı and Ayasofya. Often quiet; mainly foreign visitors. Architecturally stirring.

MORE BATHS IN ISTANBUL

Many neighbourhoods have good hammams: most are single, rather than double, dividing the day between men (*erkekler*) and women (*kadınlar*). Check the notice on the door before barging in, or call first. For contact details, hours and succinct descriptions of 50 baths, see Orhan Yılmazkaya's *A Light onto a Tradition and Culture* (Çitlembik).

Two good hammams on the Bosphorus are **Beylerbeyi** (+90 216 321 4683) on the Anatolian shore, built at the same time as the pretty 18th-century waterside mosque next door; and the tiny men-only hammam at **İstinye** (+90 212 277 5204), on the European shore – one historian insists it is the oldest, built pre-conquest for the Turkish fleet.

Of the dozen or so in the Old City, there's **Kadırga Hamamı** (+90 212 518 1948), below Sultanahmet Mosque, built for sailors in 1506, and **Sofular** (+90 212 521 3759), by the Aksaray metro station, now the hub of the city: busy but clean. Near Yedikule is the excellent family-run **Hacı Kadın Hamamı** (+90 212 585 9390), off Samatya Caddesi – the owner's children rush back from university to manage it.

For those who find bathing in public intimidating, many Istanbul hotels now have their own luxury hammams.

BURSA HAMMAMS

Turkey is full of thermal springs. Best known are the *kaplıca* (thermal baths with hot plunge pools) of Bursa, two hours from Istanbul. The **Yeni Kaplıca**, close to the Archaeological Museum (+90 224 236 6968), dates to around 1580 and is just as lively now as then; the **Eski Kaplıca** in Çekirge, now part of the large 5-star Kervansaray Hotel (+90 224 233 9300), is more exclusive, more relaxing. Some hotels in Bursa, such as the **Gönlüferah** (+90 224 233 9210), still have private thermal baths in the basement, complete with pools.

While you're in Bursa, don't miss the **Esat Uluumay Museum** in Muradiye (+90 224 225 4813) – ask Mr Uluumay to show you his hammam collection.

Elif Şehitoğlu's *Historic Hammams of Bursa* (Tarih Vakfı) is good general reading on Turkish baths.

WHERE TO SEE BATH PARAPHERNALIA

Hammam accessories are a vital part of the ritual of bathing. The best collections are in Istanbul, at the **Sadberk Hanım Museum**, whose bath shoes and textiles appear in this issue, and at the **Topkapı**, which held a large hammam exhibition in 2006. Other good private collections await a home. It is high time a hammam museum was built.

SADBERK HANIM MUSEUM
Büyükdere, Istanbul
+90 212 242 3813
sadberkhanimmuzesi.org.tr

TOPKAPI PALACE MUSEUM
Sultanahmet, Istanbul
+90 212 512 0480
topkapisarayi.gov.tr

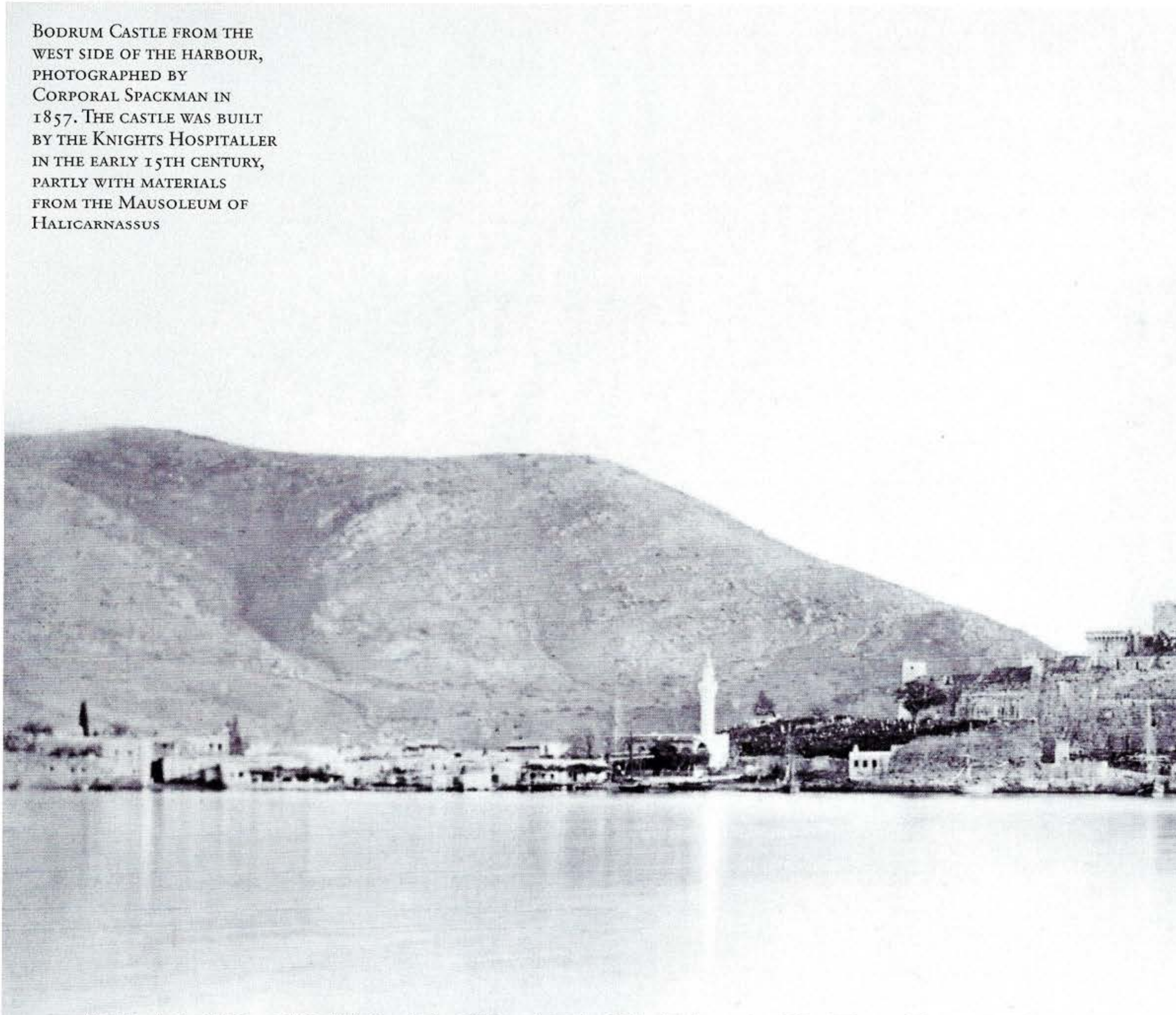
RIGHT: A RICHLY EMBROIDERED LINEN TOWEL FOR USE AFTER THE BATH, PICTURED ON A MADDER RED SILK WRAP, BOTH AT THE SADBERK HANIM MUSEUM

What Freya Stark had to say in 1965 …about bathing by the Bosphorus

"Gül announces a bath, and leads with soap and towels to where wooden clogs stand on the threshold of the bathroom's shadowy corners and stone floor. Triangles of light are let rather dimly into the ceiling dome, and as one stands naked there, Gül with a a brass dish pours the water over neck and shoulders while it overlaps its marble bowls around one's feet. She soaps one's back into the phantom ease of childhood, passive in nanny's hand. Gül, whose name is Turkish was not like nanny; she was a tough young peasant wife from the far eastern edge of Erzincan, with a little girl of three, the household pet, who would creep round our table like a mouse when her bedtime came, to touch the hand of master or guest with her forehead for good night. She had the eyes of her father, who waited on us, dark pools of wonder; but Gül was as clear, fair and positive as the wild rose of her name, and talked in some strident eastern dialect... 'Shall we soap a third time?' she would ask, having scrubbed with the rough glove twice already: she was doubtful of western cleanliness."

From Freya Stark, 'A Sketch of Turkish History', 1965

The travel writer Freya Stark (1893–1993) wrote this extract when staying with friends at the Hekimbaşı Yalı in Anadoluhisarı, on the Bosphorus. Her books on Turkey, based on five remarkable journeys, include Alexander's Path *and* The Lycian Shore



BODRUM CASTLE FROM THE WEST SIDE OF THE HARBOUR, PHOTOGRAPHED BY CORPORAL SPACKMAN IN 1857. THE CASTLE WAS BUILT BY THE KNIGHTS HOSPITALLER IN THE EARLY 15TH CENTURY, PARTLY WITH MATERIALS FROM THE MAUSOLEUM OF HALICARNASSUS

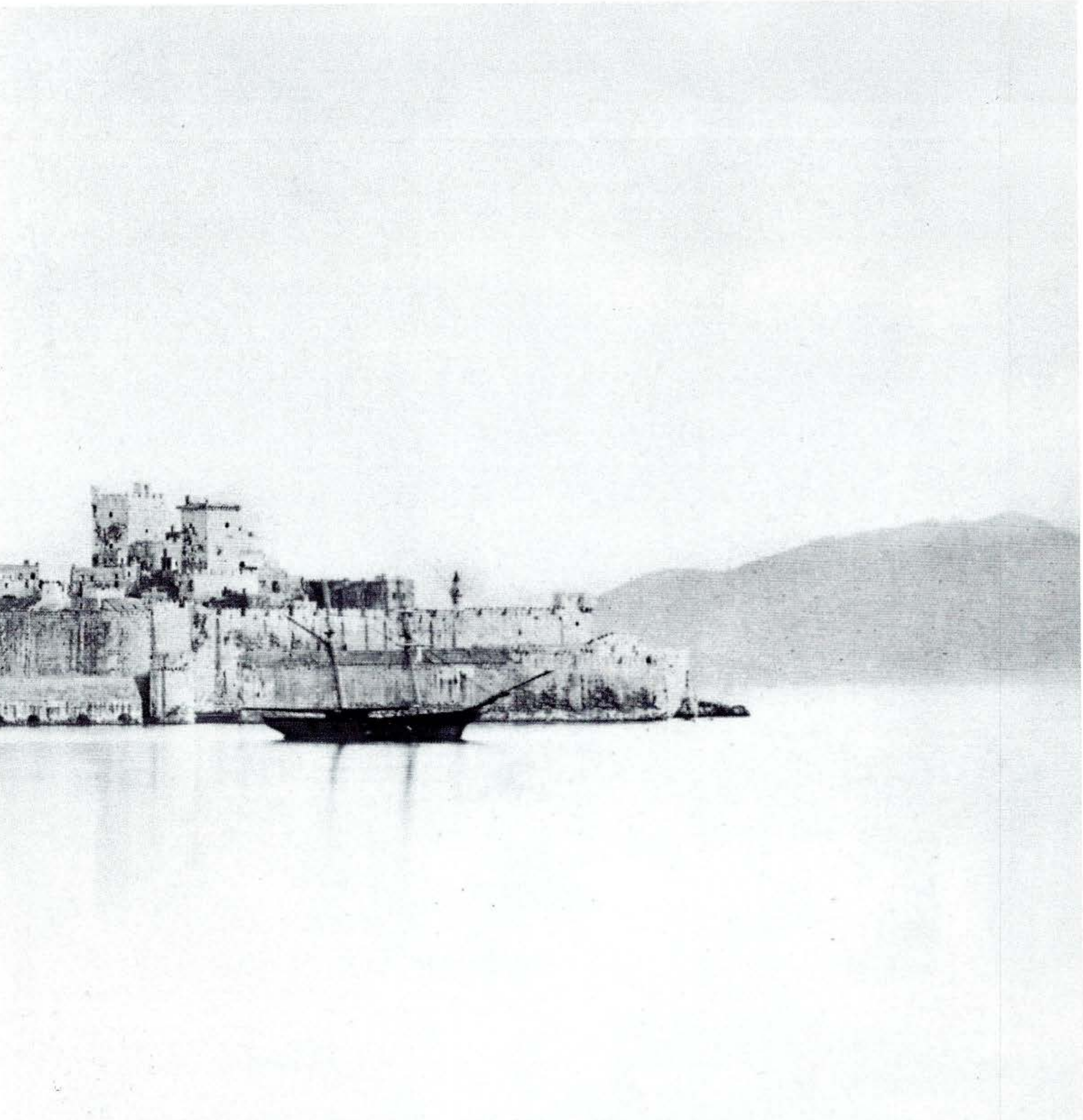
DIGGING FOR GLORY

BODRUM'S PEACE WAS SHATTERED IN 1856 BY THE ARRIVAL OF A WARSHIP BEARING ONE OF THE MOST AMBITIOUS ARCHAEOLOGICAL EXPEDITIONS BRITAIN HAS EVER LAUNCHED. LEADING IT WAS CHARLES NEWTON. HIS MISSION WAS TO LOCATE, EXCAVATE AND CARRY HOME ONE OF THE SEVEN WONDERS OF THE ANCIENT WORLD. BY RUPERT SCOTT

On the morning of November 15, 1856, there was excitement in the normally sleepy town of Bodrum. *HMS Gorgon*, a steam-driven corvette of the Royal Navy, lay at anchor in the bay, almost in the shadow of the Castle of St Peter. It began to disembark great quantities of equipment. Carts laden with pickaxes, iron bars, huge coils of rope and chain, pulleys, hoists and blocks were being pulled up the beach.

This was the beginning of the archaeological expedition to Bodrum and Knidos (Cnidus), the most ambitious of the official British excavations in Asia Minor during the nineteenth century, and the longest – lasting two-and-a-half years. From the British Museum's point of view, it was also the most successful, producing three shiploads of excavated material, among which are some of the museum's greatest exhibits – the Knidos Lion, the colossal seated statues from Branchidae, and of course the sculpture from the Mausoleum of Halicarnassus itself.

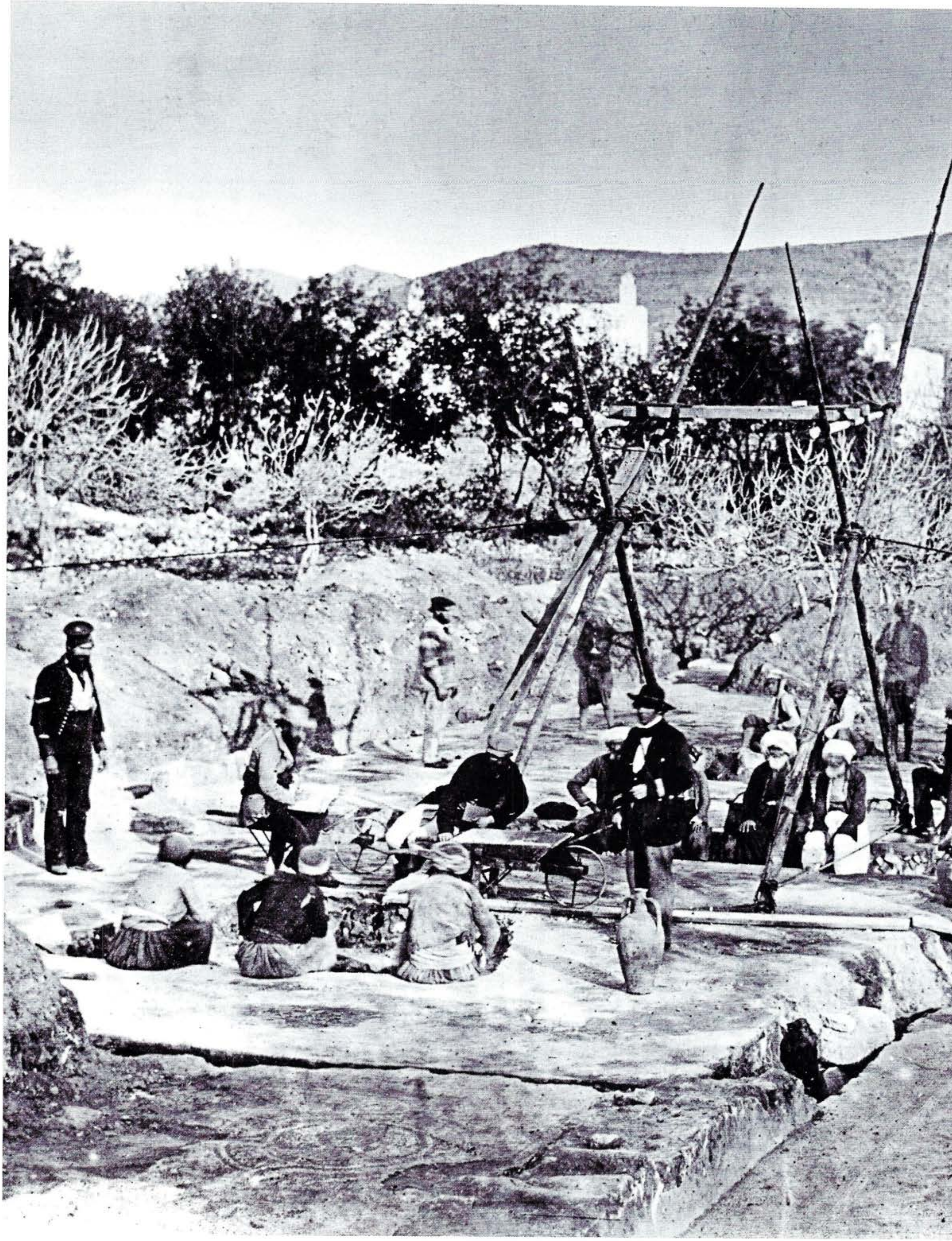
This was possibly the first archaeological expedition to be recorded photographically from start to finish. Upwards of

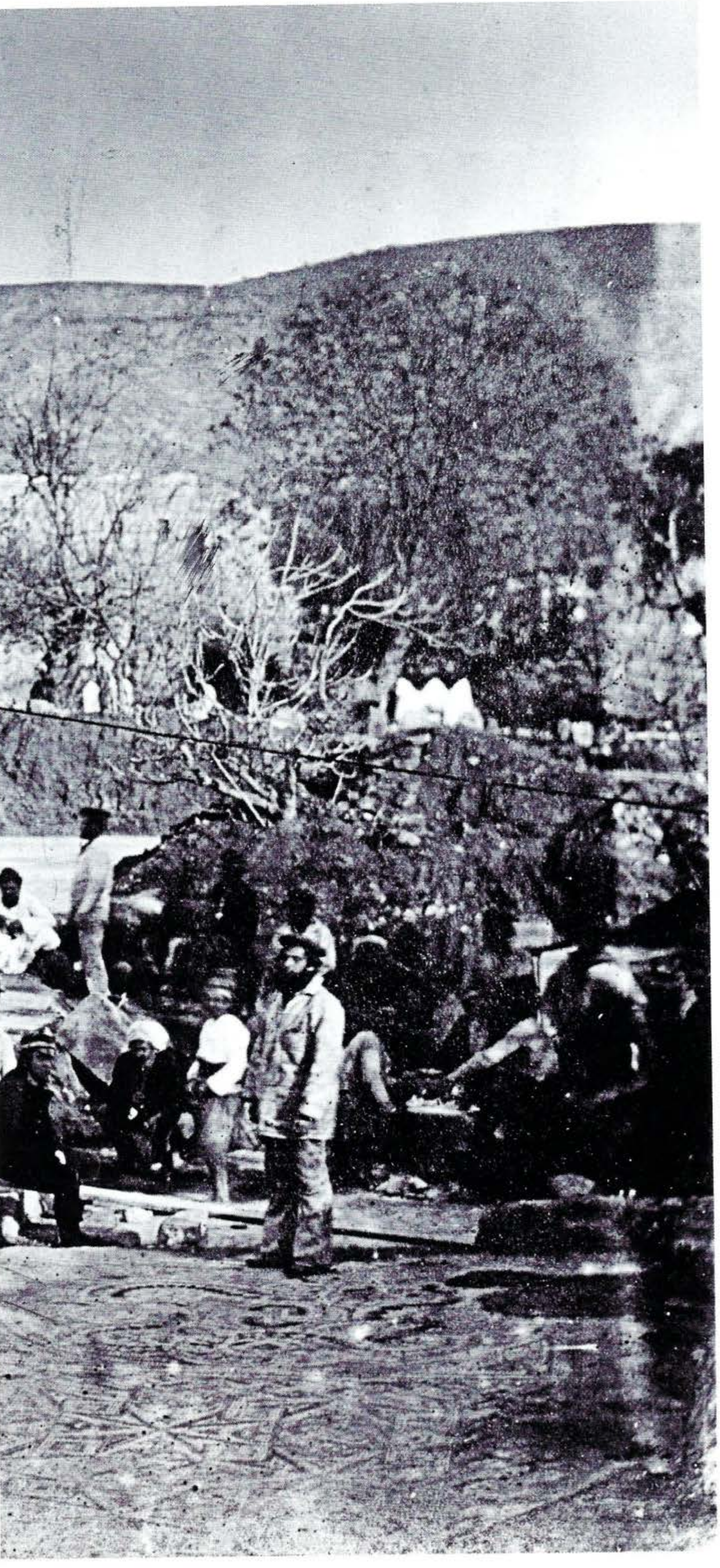


200 photographs were taken by Corporals Spackman and McCartney of the Royal Engineers, using the collodion process, which required a portable dark chamber. This was more difficult to manage than the more common waxed-paper method, but produced sharper, more brilliant images.

The expedition was led by Charles Newton, then forty years old, who would later become Sir Charles Newton, keeper of Greek and Roman antiquities at the British Museum. In photographs he appears a short, slight, retiring and effete figure, rather incongruous among the tough sailors and the semi-military equipment of the expedition. In reality he was anything but retiring and effete. He was ruthless in the pursuit of his goal and as adept at dealing with the Foreign Secretary in London as with the proprietors of the houses in Bodrum inconveniently placed in the way of his intended excavations.

Newton had entered the British Museum in 1840 as an assistant in the Antiquities Department (antiquities, classical, oriental and medieval, as well as ethnographical objects, were at the time in one department). In 1852 he left the





museum to become vice-consul at Mytilene, with the object of exploring the coasts and islands of Asia Minor. Unofficially he was the British Museum's scout in the east Aegean, actively pursuing antiquities to send back to London.

With funds supplied by Lord Stratford de Redcliffe, then British ambassador at Constantinople, in 1852 and 1855 he made important discoveries on the island of Kalymnos. However, excavations on a more ambitious scale in Bodrum and Knidos had been in his mind for some time. Well-connected and persuasive, on a visit to London in the summer of 1856 he had convinced Lord Clarendon, the British Foreign Secretary of the time and an enthusiastic antiquarian, of the potential benefits of an official expedition to these sites. In August Newton submitted a detailed paper to Clarendon identifying three principal benefits from the proposed expedition: "firstly to secure further sculpture from Bodrum Castle [thereby adding to the so-called 'Canning Marbles' at the British Museum, removed from the castle in 1848 at the instigation of Lord Stratford de Redcliffe, then Stratford Canning], secondly to identify and excavate the site of the Mausoleum of Bodrum, and thirdly to carry out excavations in Knidos".

Newton had carried out some preliminary digging in Bodrum in the previous year, but was not yet certain of the Mausoleum's exact location. Of Knidos he writes: "Considering the great celebrity of Knidos in Antiquity and the magnificence of the architectural remains which cover the site, there is great probability that fine sculpture and interesting inscriptions would be found under the mass of the super-incumbent ruins..."

For excavations there, "a ship of war would be absolutely necessary, for there is no village on the spot. Both food and water must therefore be imported...The masses of marbles that encumber the ground could only be cleared away by the application of strong tackle...which are only to be found on board a man of war".

Newton originally envisaged a six-month expedition, from mid-October to mid-April, at a total cost of £2,000. He believed it would be possible to spend less, but his experiences at Kalymnos had shown him that "the chances of success are diminished by conducting researches on too minute and

FOLLOWING HIS ARRIVAL IN NOVEMBER 1856, IT TOOK NEWTON OVER TWO MONTHS TO FIND THE EXACT LOCATION OF THE MAUSOLEUM. THIS EARLY EXCAVATION SITE PROVED TO BE IN THE WRONG PLACE, BUT REVEALED A FINE 1ST-CENTURY MOSAIC FLOOR economical a scale". In reality, Knidos was to prove a more difficult site for excavations than Newton had anticipated.

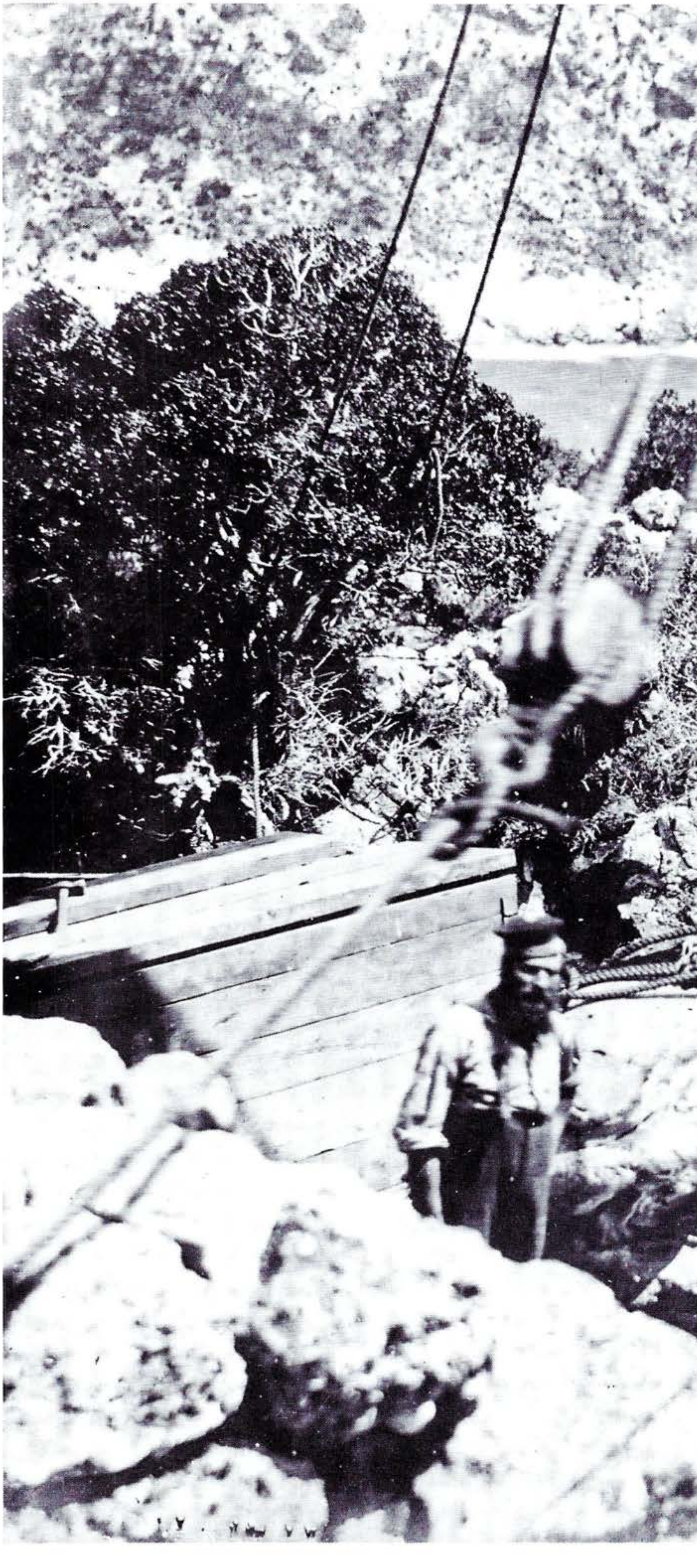
The British Museum lent Newton its vital moral support. Anthony Panizzi, the Principal Librarian, wrote to Clarendon: "I hope your Lordship will give a favourable consideration to this proposal, from which I expect great results. Mr Newton is especially anxious that the prospect of removing the lions [from Bodrum Castle] is kept secret. He feels the French would be after them."

Clarendon approved the project and its budget of £2,000 in the first week of September, and from then things proceeded with astonishing speed. By October the expedition had been assigned an engineer, sappers and miners – and, at the suggestion of Newton, a photographer. Three artists, including the twenty-one-year-old GF Watts, were to accompany the expedition. "I am particularly anxious that Watts should join the expedition," Newton wrote. "I know of no modern artist who draws sculpture so well." Sadly, no drawing by Watts from the expedition appears to have survived.

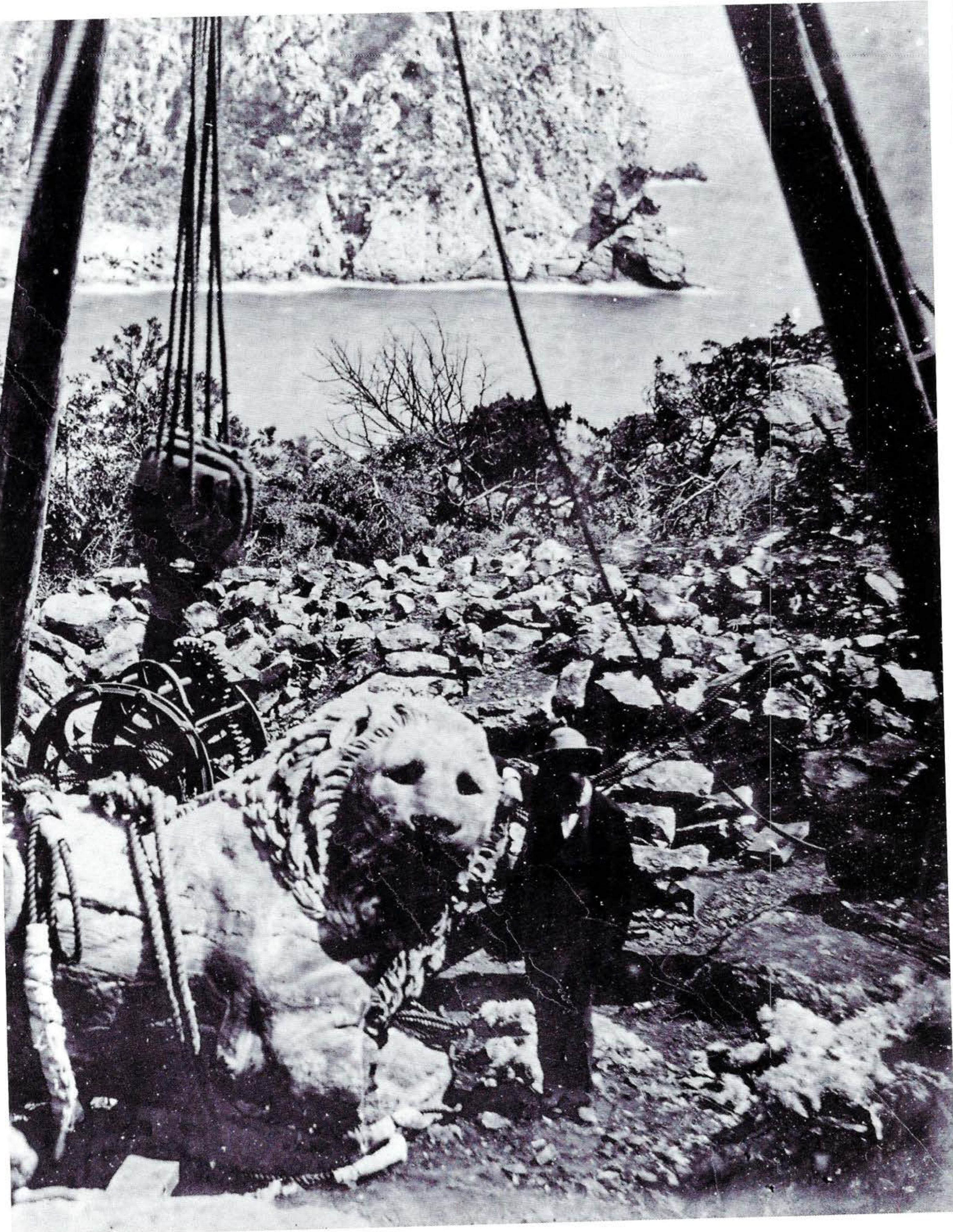
The admiralty, meanwhile, assigned *HMS Gorgon* to the expedition, and filled her hold with impressive quantities of rope, purchase blocks, spars for scaffolding, planking, tramways, tents, barrows and tools. Explosives were sent from Woolwich Arsenal. The stores list reads like that of a small military expedition.

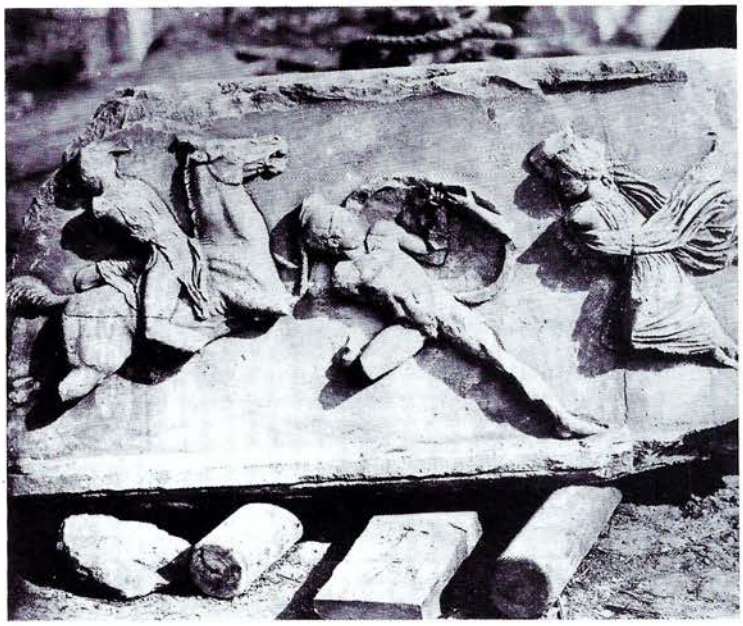
It is fortunate that Newton persuaded the Foreign Office that the expedition required "a photographic apparatus of the best kind... the cost of such is from £75 to £100". This was a large sum, but Newton successfully argued that the value of photography in providing an accurate record of the progress of expeditions was immense, and that the photographs might be useful to the navy. He writes: "It would be possible to make a series of most interesting views of the Carian promontory at the extremity of which Knidos stands, and of many ancient sites of cities..., following up and completing the scientific survey of the coast which the British Government has carried on for years by Hydrography."

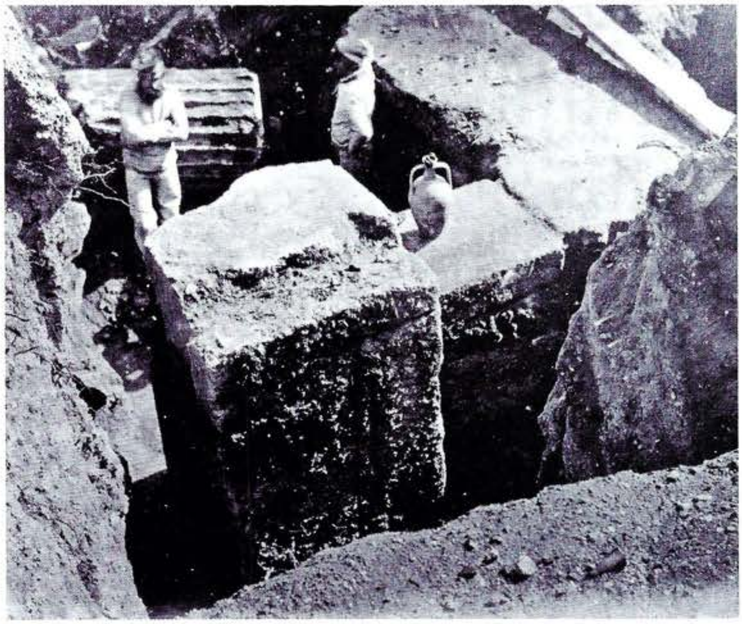
While the expedition was preparing for departure, the British ambassador in Istanbul, Lord Stratford de Redcliffe, now aged seventy and only months from retirement, made arrangements to extend an

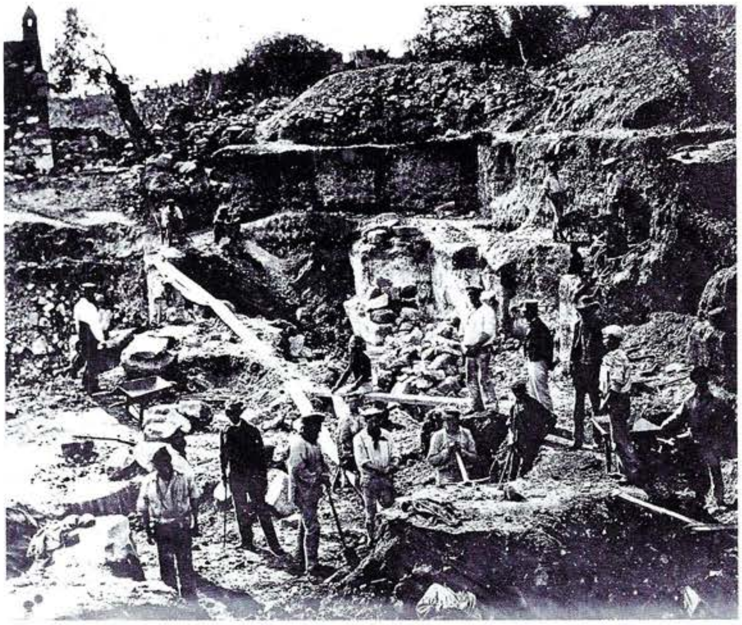


The Lion of Knidos, with Newton standing by its head. Moving the seven-ton sculpture to sea level with only ropes, pulleys and muscle-power took almost a month. In the British Museum it was displayed for many years in the same room as the Elgin Marbles









Top left: a panel from the Mausoleum's 'Amazon Frieze'. Top right: Bodrum harbour. Bottom, left and right: excavations at

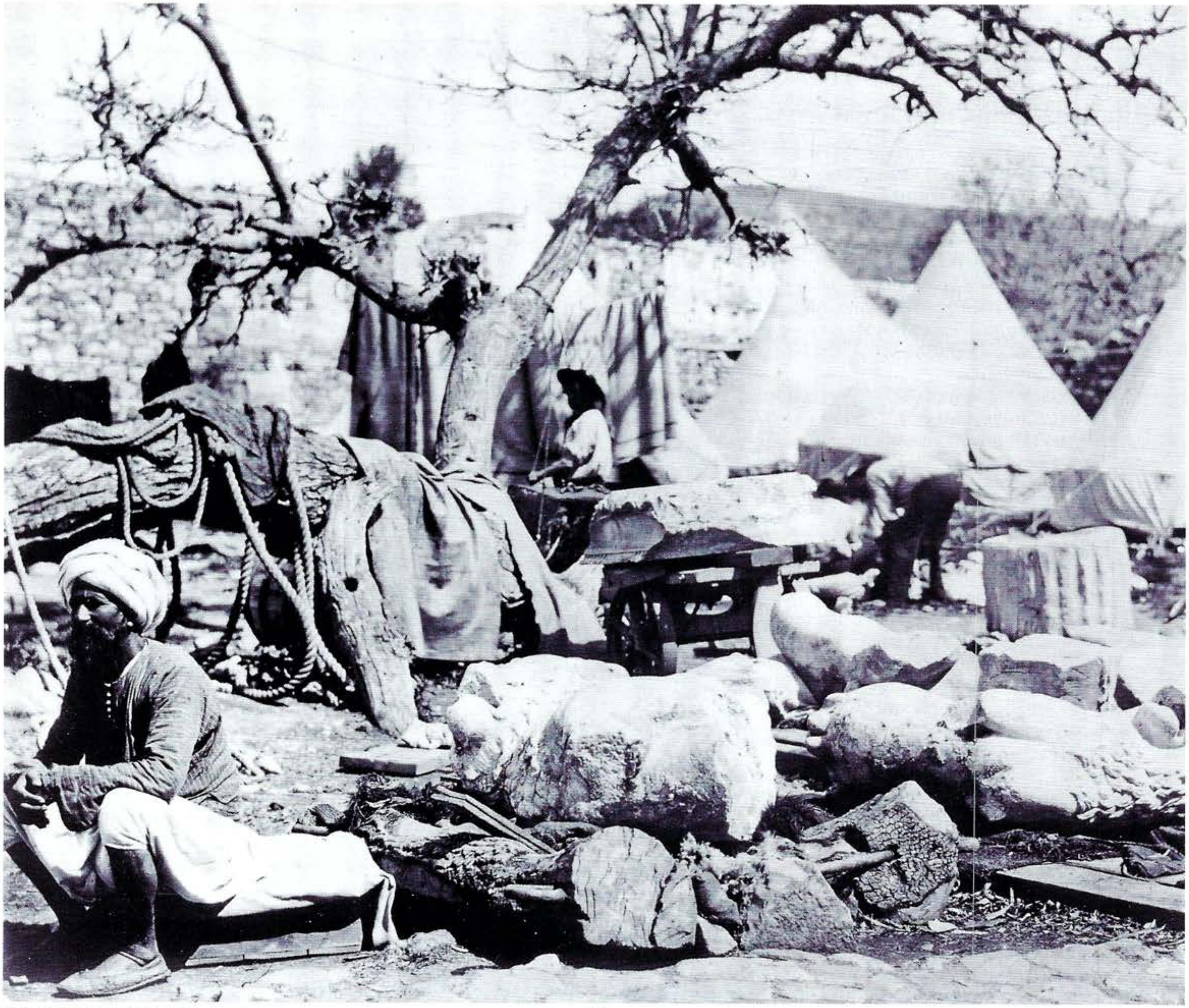
already existing firman to excavate and remove in Bodrum for another year. A separate firman was required to remove marble lions and friezes from the castle, and this was not granted until the following March. In a letter to Newton, Stratford de Redcliffe reminds him that his position regarding excavations at Knidos is still unclear:

"The permission which I obtained for you last year from the Turkish Government to make excavations at Bodrum and its neighbourhood and to remove such objects out as you may have the fortune to discover is still in force, and the vizeral letters which I have now procured for you not only confirm that permission but extend it to the full period of a twelvemonth from the time of your breaking ground... Doubts may arise as to your being at liberty to include the ancient city of Knidos within your operations. There is reason, however, to presume that in directing your attention to so promising a site you have displayed your customary judgment... I am nevertheless of the opinion that you had better run the chance of being interrupted on the spot than prematurely raising a question which might detain you here and expose you to the evil influence of jealousy and mistrust. The objection of any local functionary might be removed without reference to superior authority...

"It can hardly be necessary for me to remind you of the desire expressed in your vizeral letters that as often as any object of ancient art may be excavated in duplicate, one of the specimens should be set apart and placed at the disposal of the Turkish Government."

And so, in mid-November, the expedition had arrived in Bodrum. Newton found accommodation at the *konak* of Salik Bey, the local agha, and, with a mixed party of sailors from *Gorgon* and hired Turkish day labourers, he began to dig.

As he had predicted, locating the site of the Mausoleum proved difficult. Although in the early fifteenth century its site had been discovered by the Knights of St John, and plundered for building materials for Bodrum Castle, by 1856 there was no visible trace of the monument, despite its size (Pliny describes the structure as about 45 metres in height). He started to dig,



THE MAUSOLEUM. ABOVE: EXCAVATED COLUMNS AND SCULPTURE FROM THE MAUSOLEUM SITE, WITH CAMP TENTS IN THE BACKGROUND

first near the castle, then near the theatre. There was no sign of the Mausoleum at either site.

However, in late December his luck changed. Perhaps on the advice of Lt Murdoch Smith of the Royal Engineers (which is not acknowledged in Newton's shamelessly immodest account), he directed his workforce to dig a site almost in the garden of the *konak* where he was living. Here, in mid-January, the Mausoleum was located. Between then and June he discovered most of the sculpture now on display in the Bodrum room of the British Museum.

The first major find was the magnificent galloping horse and its rider, almost certainly from the quadriga on top of the Mausoleum, complete with its bronze harness. Newton was ecstatic. "The equestrian figure is of surpassing beauty," he wrote to Stratford de Redcliffe. "I consider it the most remarkable specimen of colossal Greek sculpture I have ever seen...While in the manner of execution it rivals the pedimental sculptures of the Parthenon, it far surpasses them in mass."

Next he found two large fragments of high relief of the battle between the Greeks and the Amazons, which ran in continuous relief round the whole building, "a slab of extraordinary beauty". There were Amazons on horseback and another Amazon on foot "in extraordinary preservation" and "finished with the delicacy of a coin or cameo". These pieces he considered to be "far superior in execution and condition to any part of the frieze now in the British Museum".

A ten-foot female statue swathed in heavy drapery, possibly a portrait statue of Artemesia, builder of the Mausoleum, he describes as "the most valuable discovery which has been made on the site of the Mausoleum".

In late April he reported the discovery of a "female head of colossal size", adding that it was "the most beautiful I have ever seen except that of the Venus at Arles".

There was, however, a problem. The site was occupied by several houses and their gardens, whose owners held out for a high price. Some of these houses Newton purchased and demolished. Others he dug around and actively undermined. But some owners either refused to sell or asked sums he was not empowered to pay. Lord Clarendon's letters from the Foreign Office show his keen interest and support: "Neglect nothing that will make your labours complete," he writes in a letter of May 20, 1857. "You are authorised to purchase whatever houses you think might be desirable to remove in carrying out your operations." Newton then raised his offer, but several owners simply refused to sell.

An incident in March 1857 revealed Newton at his most ruthless. The firman authorising the removal of the lions from Bodrum Castle was finally issued in Constantinople. The commandant of the castle was aware that the firman had been granted and was en route, but was unwilling to surrender the lions. He had them removed and put on a caique for transport to Cos. When the firman arrived, the caique was still in Bodrum harbour and, with breathtaking arrogance, Newton had the lions removed and transferred to *HMS Gorgon*. In his published diary, *Travels and Discoveries in the Levant* (1861), he describes the incident with a great air of triumph.

By the standards of modern archaeology Newton's technique was shockingly unscientific, but it was certainly fast and effective. A team of up to 100 pickmen cut trenches in the ground, supervised by sapppers. The spoil was sifted for marble fragments, which were collected. In fact the sculptures now in the British Museum were reassembled from dozens of fragments (the colossal male statue, possibly of Mausolus, was reconstructed from "upwards of fifty fragments").

At the end of June *Gorgon* left with 218 cases on board. The magnificent horse, too large to fit in the hold, was strapped down to the deck. *HMS Supply* took her place in Bodrum, and Clarendon agreed to increase the expedition's budget by a further £1,500.

PLAN
OF SITE OF
HALICARNASSUS
(BUDRUM)

ABOVE: BODRUM CASTLE ON ITS PROMONTORY. LEFT: A CONTEMPORARY MAP OF BODRUM

In August Newton made a surprising error of judgment, for which he was reprimanded by his superiors. He gave permission to the navy to remove the entire northern wall of the Mausoleum's peribulus, built of cut marble blocks, for the construction of a new dock in Malta. Panizzi was most displeased, and Newton received a curt, dictated note from Clarendon: "I am directed by the Earl of Clarendon to state to you that it would have been better not to remove the marble from Bodrum."

Newton's justification for his actions reveals his less likable side: "Had the site of the Mausoleum been discovered in a more civilised country I should have preferred to have left this last relic of the peribulus wall standing in situ, but the certainty that the wall would be broken up and applied to base uses by the natives immediately after our departure… has reconciled me to its removal for the public object I have stated."

Excavations continued in Bodrum through the autumn, but the pace of discoveries slowed. In December Newton moved to a camp at Knidos, about twenty miles away, with a party of about ten people, including a photographer and six marine guards, since an attack by pirates was not impossible. Initially he was enchanted: "There is something very attractive in this place – the delicious freshness of the air, the beauty of the scenery, the stir and activity of our little colony in the midst of such loneliness and ruin, are a pleasant change after the monotony of our life for the last twelve months". However, life proved to be unexpectedly harsh. His excavations, too, were more difficult and less productive than he had hoped.

The first month was occupied in putting up huts, which had been sent from the Crimean campaign but without their stoves. This was unfortunate, for "The winter since our arrival has been one of extraordinary severity, and from time to time a Crimean north wind sweeping with relentless fury over the naked promontory where we are encamped split the half inch of planking of our huts and penetrated the very marrow of our bones… I have sometimes felt tempted to take refuge in the tent where our little flock of sheep are folded to protect them."

Newton's plan was to employ men from the nearby village to cut away the brushwood encumbering the ruins, after which he would be able to decide on the best ground for excavation. "I think the principal object of the expedition should be determining the site of the Temple of Venus [Aphrodite] in which the celebrated statue by Praxitiles stood," Newton wrote. But the Turkish workmen were initially hard to find, and he was unable to locate the temple. Diggings near the lower theatre produced no very spectacular finds. "The Hellenic remains are so overlaid by subsequent Roman structures that it is most difficult to select a promising site for excavation," he wrote in February.

It was not until March that he made his first discoveries at Knidos – a tomb on the Tekir promontory so well hidden by brushwood that it still contained three sarcophagi and the statue of a seated Aphrodite now on display at the British Museum.

In May the great Knidos Lion, now in the British Museum's main hall, was discovered. It stood at the top of a cliff, on a high promontory about four kilometres east of Knidos. Originally it had surmounted a tomb, but it had been toppled by an earthquake. The magnificent lion, weighing some nine tons, had to be brought down a very steep incline and loaded onto a boat, using only wooden blocks and ropes – a difficult task for the twenty-one-year-old engineer in charge (the same Lt Murdoch Smith who had helped locate the Mausoleum). This operation took a month, and involved building a road, still visible today, which zigzags from the clifftop down to a rocky inlet below. The lion was mounted on an improvised wooden sledge and very slowly lowered down the road. Several sailors were injured in the process.

By July 1858 it seems from Newton's letters that he had lost hope of making any more spectacular finds at Knidos. "I am not prepared to recommend any further expenditure on the site of the ancient city itself," he wrote to the new Foreign Secretary, Lord Malmesbury. Instead he preferred to concentrate on the removal of statues from the Sacred Way at Branchidae. He had seen "an avenue of seated colossal figures" (leading from the sea to the famous Temple of Apollo at Didyma) in October of the previous year, and had immediately asked the ambassador in Constantinople (now Sir Henry Bulwer) to apply for a firman to remove them. His justification was that otherwise they would be damaged.

THE POWER OF PHOTOGRAPHY

By 1856 photography was no longer new, but recent developments had made it vastly cheaper, faster and more reliable. In 1850 Frederick Scott Archer had developed the wet collodion process, in which a glass plate is coated with a light-sensitive chemical solution, exposed while still moist, then developed in a darkroom. Inexpensive prints could then be made from the glass negative, and the quality of the images was high. Cameras could now be used in the field.

Charles Newton seems to have realised the huge potential value of photography to his expedition only days before its departure. On October 10, 1856 he wrote to the Foreign Office requesting photograhic apparatus at a cost of £75-£100 for use by a sapper trained in photography. The Foreign Office agreed to buy the camera on condition that it remained its property.

Newton makes several good arguments for the value of photography to the venture, principally its use as an archaeological record and its value to admiralty chart-makers. But photography was to have an even more important use: the power to communicate his archaeological endeavours vividly to his superiors in London.

His photographs, developed in the field and sent home, thrilled the Foreign Secretary, who forwarded them to Prince Albert. "The Prince is delighted with these," writes Clarendon in June 1857. This may help explain why a normally parsimonious government was prepared to finance the expedition for over two years.

The expedition's photographers worked hard. In fact, in 1857 Corporal Spackman, the original photographer, became ill from overwork and was replaced by Corporal McCartney. The total cost of photographic materials used by the expedition from 1856 to 1859 was over £133, about 2% of the entire budget.

Some 300 photographs were taken, of which not all have survived. Most record the diggings, but time was also found to photograph Bodrum Castle – a 360-degree panorama from the hills above the town – and nearby archaeological sites such as Lagina and Labranda and Didyma.

"I would venture to submit to your Lordship," he wrote to Clarendon, "that such interesting monuments of early Greek art as these should on no account be left in their present situation exposed to mutilation and ultimate destruction at the hand of the barbarous inhabitants of Geronta [a Greek village nearby]. A lion recently unearthed by the Caimakam of Samos has been injured since it was uncovered." The inhabitants of Geronta had "scored the surface with knives".

On August 18 the firman to remove the statues arrived. Newton writes: "I at once embarked a party of sixty Turks on board the *Supply* with all the machinery and stores necessary for the removal of statues in the Sacred Way." The operation to remove ten sculptures, a lion and a sphinx took less than a month. By September 25 Newton was back in Knidos.

In the remaining six months at Knidos Newton made a final attempt to find the famous Temple of Aphrodite, but without success. By March 1859 it was clear that Knidos was producing little and that Newton was exhausted and anxious to return home. He had been working for two and a half years without leave. The Foreign Secretary, Lord Malmesbury, and the Treasury were equally keen to end an expedition that had now cost over £5,000.

On March 22 Newton received a telegraph from Malmesbury requesting that he bring the expedition to a close. In June 1859 *HMS Supply* finally left Bodrum, leaving behind a mausoleum excavation site that Newton describes as "a desolate looking spot, of which the idea is finer than the reality".

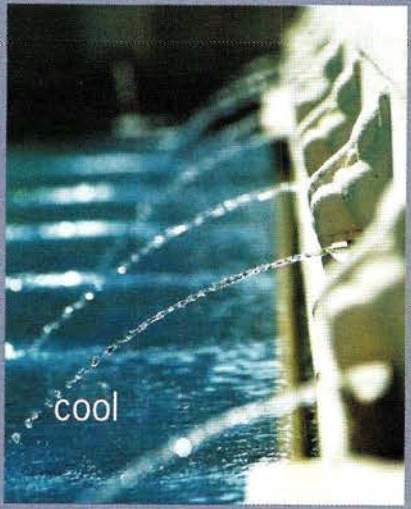
In London the expedition was viewed as a resounding success. At the instigation of Lord John Russell, Newton was paid a £500 bonus, as a token of appreciation, from the total parliamentary grant of £7,000, to cover the expenses of an expedition that had lasted in all thirty-two months. ◆

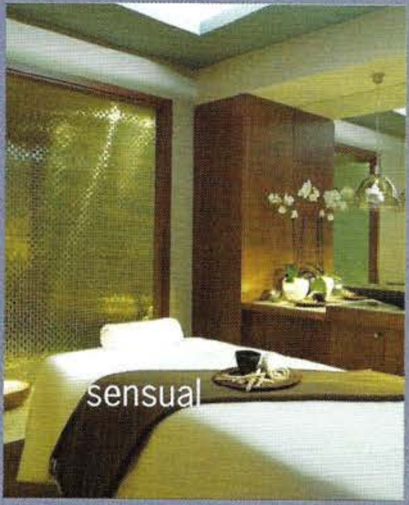
Photographs ©The Trustees of the British Museum

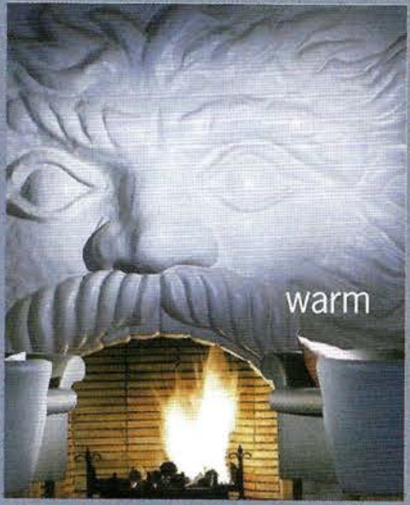
Rupert Scott is the editor of *Turkish Coast: Through Writers' Eyes* (Eland Books, £12.99).

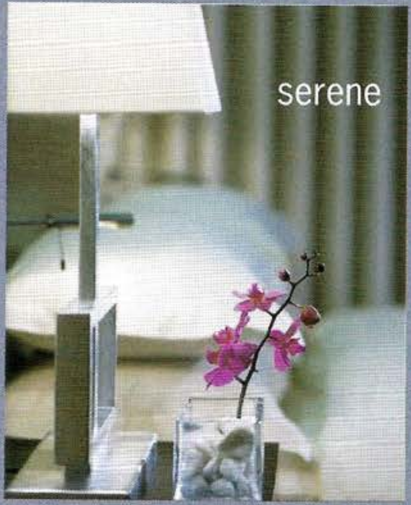
- For further reading, see *The Lion of Knidos*, by Ian Jenkins, who leads the British Museum's excavations at the site (British Museum Press, £6) scenes

cosmopolitan









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19th-century Caucasian Kuba rug, 167x117cms

Photograph: Serhat Kolerkılıç

JOY IN A BOTTLE

On the tiny island of Bozcaada, a mere speck in the Aegean, great wines are emerging that rival the best the world can offer. The Corvus Vineyards, once among the Mediterranean's most celebrated, have suffered centuries of neglect. Kevin Gould raises a glass to their renaissance with the founder of Corvus, Reşit Soley

Corvus
BOZCAADA
Teneia
ÇAVUŞ
Beyaz Sek Şarap
White Dry Wine
2005
Corvus
VINEYARDS
75cl

PHOTOGRAPH BY BERRIN TOROLSAN

ÇAVUŞ GRAPES,
THE FINEST OF TURKEY'S
TABLE GRAPES, NOW THE
SOURCE OF A DELICIOUSLY
LIGHT SUMMER WINE

KEVIN GOULD

'THE CONSTANT, SHIFTING BREEZES HELP GIVE OUR VINES ENERGY – BUT EVERY TINY VALLEY AND HILLSIDE MUST BE MICRO-MANAGED IF THE GRAPES ARE TO ACHIEVE THEIR POTENTIAL'

A darling, lonely island, Bozcaada is a village adrift in the Aegean. There may be more fashionable islands, and there are more beautiful villages, but nowhere else in Turkey is so great a wine made. Bozcaada is the home of Corvus Vineyards, and in Corvus Turkey has her first *grands crus*. Every great wine is inspired by a remarkable person, whose personality informs the wine's personality. His energy is embodied in the wine's energy, his dreams give the wine wings. *Corvus* is the Latin for crow, a sacred bird that has Apollo to thank for turning its feathers black. For Corvus wines we must thank Reşit Soley.

Reşit is a spitfire of energy, restless and strong, tireless and ageless. Before becoming Turkey's best winemaker, he was a renowned architect, and he argues that the disciplines of winemaking and architecture are the same: "The foundations must be sound. Without the best grapes you cannot make the best wine." Turkey has the soil, climate and cultural traditions to grow the world's finest grapes, but it is typical of Soley that he has striven further than any other Turk to know first his *terroir*, then the art of winemaking.

Corvus Vineyards comb the low, bumpy southern shores of Bozcaada by the lonely coves of Habbele, Ajana, Balkon and Ova. Microclimates occur every few metres. "Ships have always sheltered from the winds here – the Greeks before the Trojan War, the Allies before Gallipoli," he explains. "The constant, shifting breezes help give our vines energy – but every tiny valley and hillside must be micro-managed if the grapes are to achieve their potential."

Varieties matter, too. Since 2003 Reşit has been clearing virgin land of its rocks and, depending on the soils in each of Corvus's 40-plus hectares (in one hectare there may be red, green and brown soils), planting Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot, Syrah and Malbec. These are not the heavy-cropping clones found everywhere else, but rare ones that produce very low yields – low-yielding fruit being the foundation of any structured, complex wine. Corvus also honours the vinous traditions of Bozcaada, where grapes have been grown and wine made for at least 3,000 years, by also using the local Karalahna, Kuntra and Vasilaki varieties. Soley even makes a wine from Çavuş, a table grape. "I trust my soil," he says simply.

"There is another ingredient." Soley squeezes a pert, plump grape between forefinger and thumb before thoughtfully chewing the skin. "The best word for it is 'joy'." A look in any direction confirms this: Corvus grow fruit that is gorgeously healthy, sensitively matured and bursting with joy. "The secret is respect," he says seriously. "Out of respect for this land, this fruit and our wines, we grow biodynamically."

This system requires dynamising the soil with organic compost preparations, and feeding, pruning and harvesting the vines during specific phases of the moon. The wine itself is then dynamised. It would be easier, of course, to use chemicals, but making truly great wine should never be easy.

It cannot have been easy to give up one successful career for another, but Reşit Soley has the *cojones* to revel in the challenge. "I've been coming to Bozcaada for twenty-five years and saw erosion, both of vineyards and traditions," he sighs. Something had to be done. He admits having come to winemaking in blissful ignorance, but this ignorance is leavened by the fiercely intelligent logic that Soley once brought to bear on his building projects. The first Corvus project was building the winery towards which we now bump in his elderly Land Rover.

The winery is a fine modern building that blends tradition with innovation, built over the bones of an old Tekel (state monopoly) business. There are shiny stainless-steel tanks, a magnificent bottling line and a huge investment in Italian, French and American oak *barriques*. In the cask-rooms all seems silent and still, but the sense is of abundant energy, of fine wines evolving and growing, and of tremendous potential.

In wines there is much talk of Old and New Worlds. However, rather than ape the fashionable, glib fruit-driven style, Reşit Soley is making completely natural wines of complexity and character that marry the brio of the New World with the culture and personality of the ancient one. On this lost, lonely, genuine, still-innocent island, our ex-architect constructs his wines with art, craft and beauty. Corvus wines are delicious to drink now, but – excitingly – also have the structure and strength required for ageing.

The Apollo of legend was the god of light, sun, honesty and prophecy, and Reşit Soley's wines embody the promise of life, energy, truth and timelessness. As with Apollo, in Corvus there is joy, music and poetry.

Kevin Gould's books *Dishy* and *Loving and Cooking with Reckless Abandon* are available from cornucopia.net

SOLVI DOS SANTOS

OPPOSITE: A FIELD OF VASILAKI VINES BETWEEN A RUINED FARMSTEAD AND A REMOTE COVE. THE GRAPES WILL BE TURNED INTO A SWEET WINE.
LEFT: A GRAND PIANO STANDS IN THE MIDDLE OF THE WINERY – WHICH HAS EXCELLENT ACOUSTICS. THE BOTTLES BEHIND IT, SOME MORE THAN A CENTURY OLD, WERE UNEARTHED ON THE ISLAND. A FEW STILL CONTAIN TRACES OF WINE.
PHOTOGRAPH FROM 'AT HOME IN TURKEY', EXCERPTED IN THE BOOKS SECTION

TASTING NOTES

All Corvus wines, except their Öküzgözü and Boğazkere (made with grapes shipped in from southeast Anatolia), exhibit a delightful herby, savoury character. We can only conclude that this comes from Bozcaada's maritime vineyards and the fields of wild herbs surrounding them.

Another Corvus personality trait is what the Italians call "sapidity". An English term for this is a "mouthwatering" quality – as with the world's very best wines, each sip entices the palate to take another. These wines can be characterised as elegantly muscled. And all, except possibly Rarum, have ageing potential of 10 or more years.

Winemakers all over the world boost alcohol levels in order to hide faults, and the resulting wines are heady, flabby and insincere. Being sensitively and expertly made from late-harvest grapes, Corvus wines are naturally high in alcohol, but never heady or over-rich: a mark of great winemaking. Each glass we tasted was beautifully complete – with alcohol, fruit and tannins in harmony and balance. All (except Passito) are even better decanted and given time to grow in the glass.

"The best wine is one you want to finish." So says Reşit Soley, and, in the cool calm of Corvus's cellars, CORNUCOPIA gladly finished all of these:

MERLOT 2007

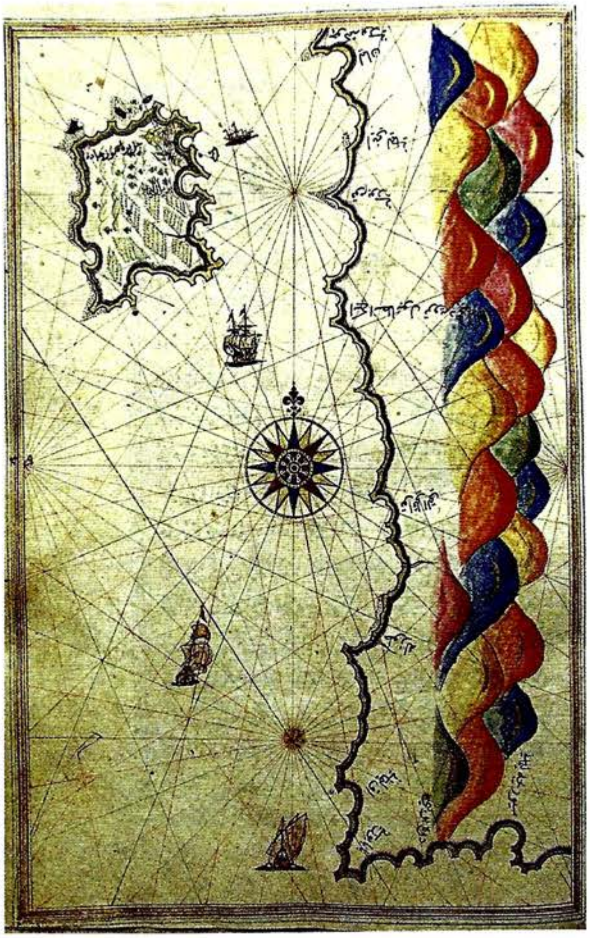
FOR RELEASE DECEMBER 2009

A wild, herby nose reminiscent of summer sage at sunset, with hints of malva and lavender. In the mouth, great complexity; gorgeous acidity; balanced tannins; no oak predominating. A first nudge of sweet fruit opens immediately into mouthwatering sapidity that reaches behind the wisdom teeth. Long, elegant, feminine; will mature into a wine of grace and flexibility.

MALBEC 2007

FOR RELEASE DECEMBER 2009

Malbec is the original grape of Bordeaux. Rarely was she so pretty as here. Restrained on the nose, shy, if you like, in the mouth, there is an initial playful grip of tannins that soon relaxes to release bright red summer fruits that excite and refresh the palate. A wine of allure and wit to which age will doubtless add even more sensual sophistication.



ISTANBUL UNIVERSITY LIBRARY

THE VINEYARDS OF BOZCAADA ARE CLEARLY MARKED ON THIS MAP. THIS IS FROM A 17TH-CENTURY COPY OF 'KITAB-I BAHRIYE' (BOOK OF SEAS) BY THE LEGENDARY OTTOMAN NAVIGATOR PIRI REIS, C1510

CABERNET SAUVIGNON 2007

FOR RELEASE DECEMBER 2009

As Corvus's Merlot and Malbec are shapely and feminine, so its Cabernet Sauvignon is a masculine wine. Masculine here does not imply brute strength: rather it denotes a sense of power, dynamism and savouriness. On the nose and on the palate, cassis, dark Venezuelan chocolate and the tang of cherries, with island notes of wild herbs and warm earth. Power with finesse and immense likability. As above, one that will age and continue developing until 2017 at least.

CORPUS 2005

Reşit Soley's blend of Merlot, Syrah and Cabernet Sauvignon is a triumph. To aromas of blackberries, figs and hay add vanilla and cloves. At least one 3-Michelin-star sommelier agrees that the palate is full-bodied, with a ripe tannin structure, balanced acidity, well-integrated alcohol and well-judged use of oak. Flavour profile is dark cherries, plums, raspberries and figs. Finish is long, with a touch of savoury bitterness. Drink by itself for deep contemplation, with red meat and game for inspiration. Will age beautifully.

RARUM 2005

70% Kuntra, 30% Karalahna grapes, fermented together. Intriguing and much more than a local "novelty" wine. Modest nose, with berries and a certain savouriness that explodes into feel-good fruit overlaid with notes of liquorice and vanilla. Drink young; this wine flatters olive-oil-based dishes, tender lamb and hearty seafood.

ÖKÜZGÖZÜ and BOĞAZKERE 2005

Many bad wines have come from these native Anatolian grapes. Corvus elevates them to a stage worthy of an international audience.

A curranty nose tells stories of southeast Anatolia's brilliant sunshine. Sensitive oaking adds notes of bourbon vanilla. With the voluptuous, dark body and well-integrated ripe and tart plum flavours that the best Öküzgözü and Boğazkere grapes have always promised but rarely delivered.

TENEIA 2005

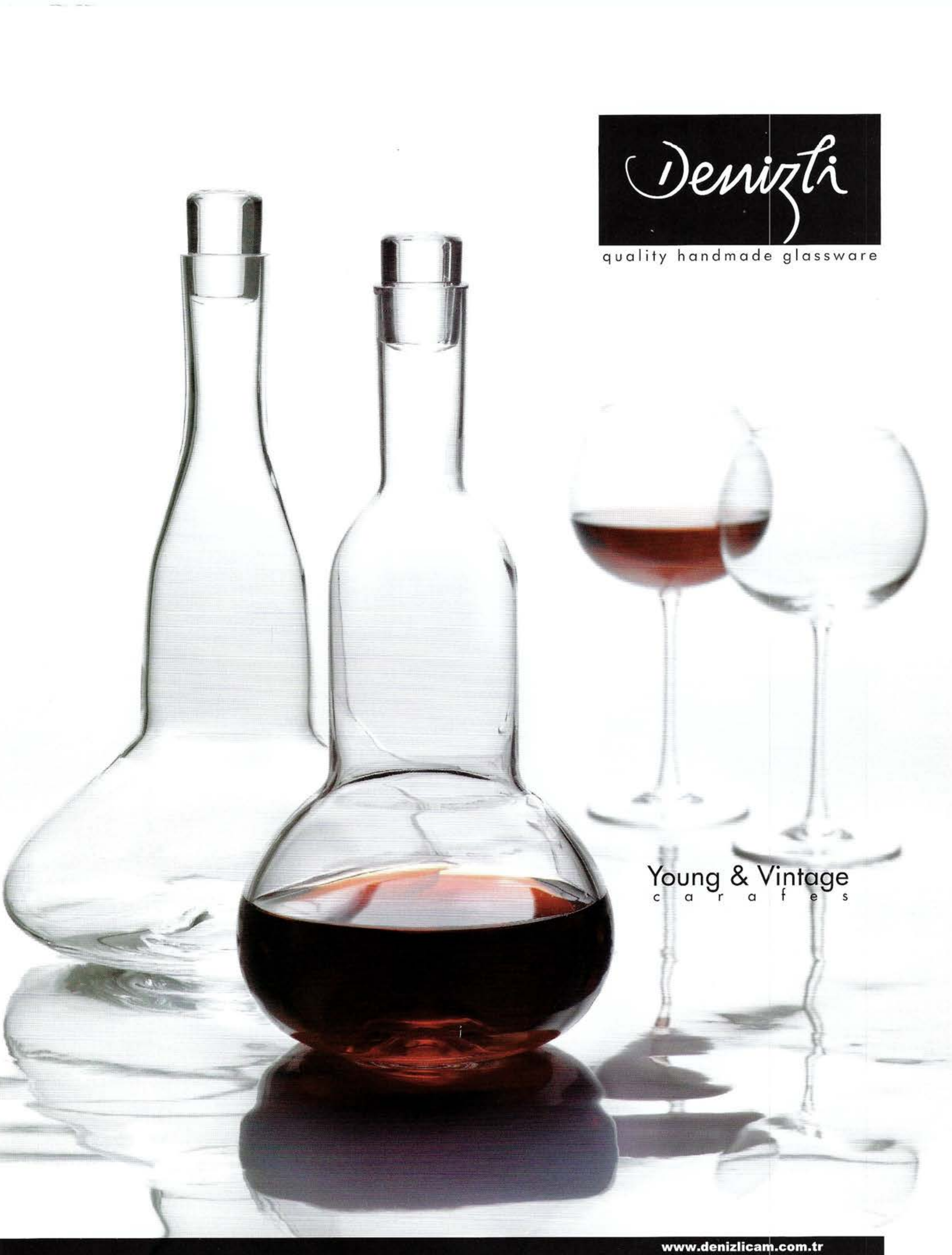
Made from the Çavuş grape, this is a rewarding afternoon wine, light in alcohol, with a romantic impression of refreshing sea breezes and the scent of summer herbs.

PASSITO 2004

Passum, one of the oldest Mediterranean wines, was made and drunk by the Phoenicians. Its method involves sun-drying grapes – in this case, Bozcaada's native Vasilaki – before making wine from them. Corvus air-dries Vasilaki between August and December, before pressing the grapes, fermenting for six months and maturing the wine for 24 months in acacia casks. The result is a sweet but never cloying wine to drink with sweet biscuits, dessert or hand-made chocolates. As with all Corvus wines, Passito exhibits Bozcaada's unique island notes of savoury sapidity, here overlaid with round, refreshing peach-like notes. Delicious. ◆

- Corvus wines: corvus.com.tr

- Map from *Bozcaada: Harita ve Gravürleri (Tenedos: Maps and Engravings of the Island)*, by M Hakan Gürüney (trans. Muhtar Katırcıoğlu) published by Bozcaada Museum (bozcaadamuzesi.com.tr)



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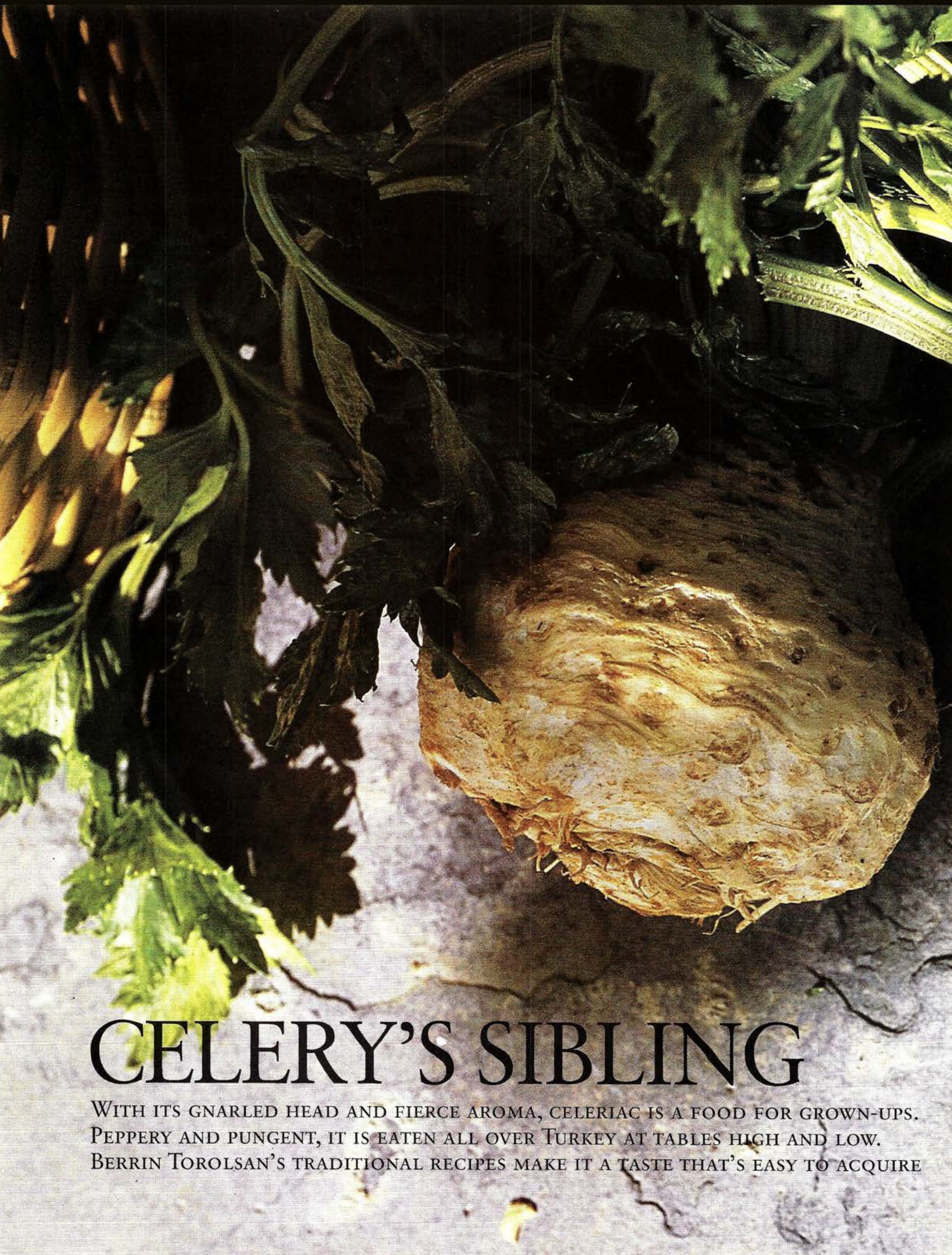

CELERY'S SIBLING

With its gnarled head and fierce aroma, celeriac is a food for grown-ups. Peppery and pungent, it is eaten all over Turkey at tables high and low. Berrin Torolsan's traditional recipes make it a taste that's easy to acquire

PHOTOGRAPHS BY BERRIN TOROLSAN

ABOVE: TENS OF TONS OF CELERIAC TRUNDLE EVERY DAY DOWN THIS MODEST DIRT ROAD NEAR GEYVE, IN THE SAKARYA VALLEY.
ABOVE RIGHT: THE LAST WINTER CROP, IN FEBRUARY. BROAD SWATHES OF CELERIAC ARE PLANTED IN BETWEEN SPINACH AND RED CABBAGE

The other day I overheard the Turkish comedian Metin Akpınar say on a chat show how as a teenager he hated celery. "Days when celery was on the menu, I didn't even want to come into the house. I couldn't bear the smell. Yet now, if I found celery-scented eau de cologne, I'd be delighted to use it!"

I share the same sentiments, more or less. I find myself enjoying the flavour of celery more and more with each passing year. And the same goes for its sibling celeriac, which is simply a form of celery bred, probably in the 16th century, to have a bulbous lower stem.

As celery's Latin name, *Apium graveolens*, indicates, it is powerful-smelling. The pronounced aroma of apiol, the essential oil which gives celery and celeriac their distinctive peppery piquancy, has interested people from very early on, both as a flavouring and for its medicinal properties. Mummies have been found in Egypt with bouquets of lotus flowers arranged with the dark-green foliage of wild celery. Dioscorides and Pliny both praised the plant's healing properties. Celery was an ingredient of *garum*, the Roman condiment prepared with fermented fish and aromatic herbs, and the celebrated Roman gourmet Apicius gives recipes for celery-flavoured sauces and dips. It is difficult to tell if celery was already in cultivation at the time or was only gathered from the wild.

Yahya ibn al Awam, a landowner in 12th-century Andalusia, notes in his agricultural calendar that celery seeds should be sown in beds in March, adding that the plant itself may be used as a promoter of erotic delights and a safeguard against scorpions. He also gives a practical tip: roughly two drachms (2.5g) of celery seeds, when chewed, are the best protection against seasickness.

Food historians agree that celery was introduced to France and Italy from the Iberian Peninsula, and later to the rest of Europe. Leonhard Rauwolf, a German physician and herbalist from Augsburg who travelled in the Levant for three years and visited Constantinople in 1573, mentions in passing in his *Herbal Glossary* that celery and its roots are a delicacy in Tripoli and Aleppo. The word he uses, *Eppich*, is the local German name derived from the Catalan and Provençal *api*, which suggests that celery was by then a common plant in Europe.

Writing 200 years earlier, in the 14th century, the Ottoman physician Celâlüddin Hızır, in the prologue of his health-care manual *Müntahab-ı Şifâ*, advised: "In winter one should take care to keep warm by wearing thick clothes and fur, consuming dishes prepared with warming ingredients and game such as partridge or pigeon and eating a lot of warming herbs such as [winter] cress and celery." He often mentions celery for its curative properties in various illnesses, including diseases of the liver and spleen. Jaundice he treats with a concoction that includes *"kerefes köki"*, the root of the celery. In another remedy he refers to a specific type of celery growing wild in the mountains, which implies that it was also a cultivated plant.

In old manuscripts, celery was generally classified as a herb, because, like parsley, dill and coriander, it was originally a delicate thin-stemmed plant with a powerful aroma – in English it was known as smallage. Belonging to the family of *Umbelliferae*, it produces cream or pale-yellow umbrella-shaped flower heads in spring. Over the centuries, the herb gave rise to two different varieties perfected through selected breeding.

One, known to us today simply as celery, produces showy leaves and overdeveloped ribbed stalks with a sweeter, more agreeable taste (var. *dulce*); this is what promoted the plant from modest herb to vegetable, adding flavour to soups, stews, pickles – and Bloody Marys, which are not the same without a stick of celery in the glass (or at least some celery salt, made with the seeds).

The second horticultural breakthrough was to breed from the same plant a variety with an

ABOVE LEFT: CELERIAC FRESH FROM THE FIELD BEFORE THE ROOTS ARE TRIMMED. ABOVE: BASKETS OF CELERIAC AFTER BEING HOSED DOWN, GLEAMING AND READY TO BE SENT OFF TO MARKET

overdeveloped stem-end (var. *rapaceum*), known as celeriac or root celery. Although commonly regarded as a root vegetable, like the potato, carrot or turnip, the bulbous part of the celeriac plant is not actually the root but a corm, the base of the leaf stems, out of which modest roots will grow.

In her *Vegetable Book*, Jane Grigson describes how the landscape architect and plantsman Stephen Switzer introduced celeriac seeds to England from Ottoman Alexandria in 1720; he listed celeriac in his pamphlet on growing "foreign kitchen vegetables". Either Switzer or the seed merchant who supplied him with exotic seeds from the Levant may have coined the name celeriac.

In modern Turkish, we have only one word, *kereviz* – derived from *kerefs*, which is common to Arabic and Persian – to refer to everything from the wild herb to cultivated stem varieties and the giant-cormed celeriac.

Wild celery is still collected in the Turkish countryside in winter and is useful as a warming addition to soups and pickles. Cultivated stem celery is available in Istanbul markets, but it is not really part of Turkey's gastronomic culture and is more commonly seen in the windows of smart greengrocers or on hotel restaurant menus. Celeriac, on the other hand, seems to have become common in Turkey by the late 16th century. It is now cultivated in huge quantities and enjoyed at tables high and low.

Dr Sâti Ekinci, a gentleman farmer working for the Agricultural Research Institute in Yeşilköy, a suburb of Istanbul, wrote a manual for the amateur vegetable gardener in 1971 in which he gives the secret of growing tender but firm celeriac: natural manure. Commercial plant foods force the production of showy foliage, strong stems and large gnarly corms that are often hollow inside, with a fibrous texture. It is reassuring to know that organic ways give satisfying results. Ekinci also explains how to grow celeriac by sowing the seedlings in early spring and planting them out in vegetable gardens, or *bostans*, where they will ripen in the shade of tomatoes and aubergines during the summer, ready to be harvested in late autumn and winter.

Things seems to have moved on since, for celeriac is now harvested almost year-round. The hinterlands of the Marmara and Aegean coasts, with their fertile volcanic soil, are ideal for a bumper harvest. Today the mecca of celeriac is Geyve, in a broad, flat valley of the Sakarya river, two hours' drive from Istanbul, where it is planted amid a sea of quince trees. Rows are planted out all the year round, ready for the corms to be unearthed by teams of village women and transported to washing stations on the edge of villages. Here the women scrub the corms with powerful jets of fresh water. They say this valley alone despatches tens of tons a day to the cities. Washed of mud and grit, trimmed and sorted by size, basketloads of celeriac heads are sent off to markets and supermarkets. Most are the size of large oranges and are sold with their aromatic leaves attached for use in cooking.

Rather than large showy heads, one should go for the medium-sized. The stems and leaves should look fresh and green and the corm not too knobbly. The flesh should be crisp yet tender, and firm-textured rather than hollow. To preserve the milk-white colour, and stop it discolouring when exposed to the air, one must either work swiftly or leave the peeled celeriac in acidulated water until it is needed. Early recipes recommend parboiling first, which suggests that celeriac used to be stronger-tasting than it is today.

The celeriac corm is the nutrient depot of the plant, packed with vitamins and mineral salts, the perfect blood-purifier, tonic and general stimulant. Little wonder that it is believed to increase the libido, too, as the Andalusian ibn al Awam whispered long ago. But this is a fine, flavoursome food, and any miraculous properties are simply a bonus.

Berrin Torolsan, bt@cornucopia.net. For cookery articles in past issues, see cornucopia.net/cookerylisting.html

Kereviz Çorbasi

Celery Soup

1 small celeriac
1 medium potato
Salt
1 teaspoon sugar
1 glass milk
1 teaspoon freshly ground white pepper
Butter (optional)

Who knows how long this comforting soup has been a joy on cold winter days? It is traditional, very simple to make and versatile. One can add more root vegetables to the pot, such as carrots, turnips or parsnips, or give the soup a deeper colour by adding a few leaves of spinach. For a particularly hearty meal you can add freshly fried croutons.

1 Setting aside the leaves and stems, discard any bruised ones and shave off any roots at the base. Peel the outer skin of the celeriac, as you would an apple, and rinse under running water. Chop roughly and put into a soup pan along with the leaves and stems.

2 Peel and chop the potatoes and add to the pan.

3 Fill the pan with cold water to cover, season with salt and sugar, and bring to the boil. Reduce the heat and cook for 10–15 minutes, until the vegetables are soft.

4 Liquidise the contents of the pan in a blender or food processor or mash with a fork and return to the pan.

5 Dilute the soup with milk. The consistency should be thickish and velvety. Reheat, stirring gently. Season to taste and sprinkle with pepper.

6 Serve with a small knob of butter in the centre of each bowl.

Zeytinyağli Kereviz

Celeriac Braised in Olive Oil

2 small celeriac of equal size
Juice of 1/2 lemon
2 medium potatoes
2 small carrots
1 large onion
4 tablespoons olive oil
Handful of frozen or fresh peas (optional)
Salt
1 tablespoon sugar
Fresh parsley to garnish

This decorative dish is served traditionally as a second course, after a hot dish, but it makes an excellent starter too. The lemony tang and delicate celery flavour sharpen the appetite. As a starter it is easier to serve it on individual plates. When choosing the ingredients, try to get the best-looking, rounded celeriac heads of more or less equal size.

1 Cut off the tops and bases of the celeriac, peel and drop them in a bowl of water acidulated with a few drops of lemon and set aside. Discard the bases, but clean and wash the tops and any leaves. If any, chop and add to the water.

2 Peel the potatoes and scrape the carrots. Dice into even-sized pieces, and add to the water.

3 Peel the onion and chop finely. Heat the oil and fry the onion until translucent over a medium heat. Drain the potatoes and carrots and transfer to the pan. Keep stir-frying for about 1 minute. Add the peas, if using them, and continue stirring for another minute or so.

4 With a sharp knife slice the celeriac heads on a board crosswise into rounds roughly one finger thick and place them on top of the lightly fried vegetables.

5 Sprinkle with salt, sugar and the rest of the lemon juice, add half a glass of cold water, lower the heat and simmer, covered, for about 15 –20 minutes, until the ingredients are tender, taking care not to overcook or they will break up. All the vegetables will cook in more or less the same time. Leave to cool, covered.

6 With a slotted spoon carefully lift each celeriac slice and arrange it on a platter or on individual plates. Pile the vegetable mixture onto the centre of each celeriac slice and spoon the cooking liquid over. Serve cold, perhaps with a few more drops of olive oil and a garnish of snipped parsley.

Etli Terbiyeli Kereviz

Tangy Stew with Celeriac

2 tablespoons olive oil
1/2 kg cubed lamb or mutton
1 large onion (chopped)
Juice of 1 lemon
1 tablespoon tomato paste
Salt and pepper
2 or 3 medium celeriac
1 egg
1 tablespoon flour

Wholesome yet delicate, this tangy stew appears in the cookery book *Evkadını (Housewife)*, written by Fahriye Hanım in 1882. Her method is identical to the way we cook it today, with one exception: Fahriye Hanım blanches the celeriac first – but she would have been using the earlier, stronger-tasting cultivars, which she calls "celery root". If the meat has already been cooked, this dish takes not more than 15 minutes to prepare.

1 Heat the oil in a casserole and cook the onion, stirring, until it is soft. Add the meat and brown well on all sides. Stir in the tomato paste, half the lemon juice and a glass of water, bring to the boil, cover and leave to simmer for an hour or so. Check from time to time, and add more water if needed. The stew should have plenty of sauce. When the meat is tender, season with salt and pepper. Leave to simmer a little longer.

2 Peel, rinse and cut the celeriac into cubes on a board. Add to the casserole and continue simmering with the lid on for 10–20 minutes, until the celeriac is tender.

3 Make the lemon sauce (*terbiye*) just before serving: using a fork, beat the egg in a deep bowl with a pinch of salt, add the flour, beat some more, and finally beat in the remaining lemon juice. Slowly spoon the hot cooking liquid from the stew into the egg mixture and blend well, to warm it gradually

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and prevent the egg from curdling.

4 Pour the egg mixture into the casserole. Stirring, reheat the stew and allow the sauce to thicken. Serve warm with good fresh bread to soak up the delicious lemony sauce.

Patlican Turşusu
Stuffed Aubergine Pickle

10 baby aubergines
Salt
Bunch of celery or celeriac leaves and stems
1 red pepper (deseeded)
Small bunch of parsley
1/4 of a small white cabbage
12 cloves garlic
Wine vinegar

Although modern versions with the addition of red pepper and cabbage look more colourful, this ancient recipe, which has not changed since the 15th century, is delicious. The flavours of celery, garlic and aubergine blend beautifully, and the result is a pickle that looks pretty, resembling little bundles, and is a perfect complement to roasts, stews and cold meats in winter. It keeps well if stored in a cool, dark place.

1 Discard the stalks of the aubergines and with the tip of a knife make a slit lengthways in each one, stopping short of the ends.

2 Bring water to the boil in a large pan with a teaspoon of salt, and blanch aubergines for about 10 minutes until tender but firm.

3 Transfer to a colander, cover with a plate and place a heavy weight on top. Leave to stand so that the bitter juices drain away under pressure. Meanwhile prepare the filling.

4 Wash the celery or celeriac leaves and stems. Set aside the leaves. If you are using celery stalks, cut them first into long thin strips. Blanch the stems or strips briefly in boiling water, until they have just wilted and are flexible enough to wrap round and tie the aubergines.

5 For the filling, finely chop the leaves, red pepper and parsley, shred the cabbage, and mix together with a tablespoon of salt. Knead the mixture by hand until the vegetables soften.

6 Boil the garlic cloves briefly to remove the skins and add to the filling.

7 Working with one aubergine at a time, lightly squeeze out as much of the moisture as possible and place on a plate. Enlarge the slit using a spoon and stuff it with the prepared filling. To secure, tie one or two strips of celery or stems of celeriac around the aubergine and pack tightly in a jar.

8 Fill a saucepan with enough vinegar to cover the aubergines in the jar. Using one heaped tablespoon of salt to one litre of vinegar, dissolve the salt in the vinegar by heating and pour into the jar to fill.

9 Cover and store in a cool place. The pickle will be ready to enjoy in a couple of days.

Kereviz ve Havuç Salatasi
Celeriac and Carrot Salad

1 medium celeriac
2 large carrots
Juice of 1 orange
Olive oil
Salt
Olives and parsley to garnish

Hippocrates' advice 2,500 years ago was to eat celery to restore frayed nerves. Modern research confirms that it helps to lower high blood pressure and has countless beneficial properties, as even a quick surf of the internet will show. The sweet acidity of orange suits this healthy salad, but lemon also works well. Celeriac discolours when exposed to the air for any length of time, so you should work quickly. Otherwise it is sensible to prepare the dressing beforehand, switching steps 1 and 2.

1 Saving the stems and leaves for another dish, peel, wash and grate the celeriac coarsely. Scrape, wash and grate the carrots.

2 In a deep bowl make the dressing by whisking the orange juice with the olive oil and salt.

3 Transfer the grated celeriac and carrots to the bowl and toss well. Decorate the top with black olives and parsley and serve.

Kereviz Salatasi
Celeriac Salad with Mayonnaise

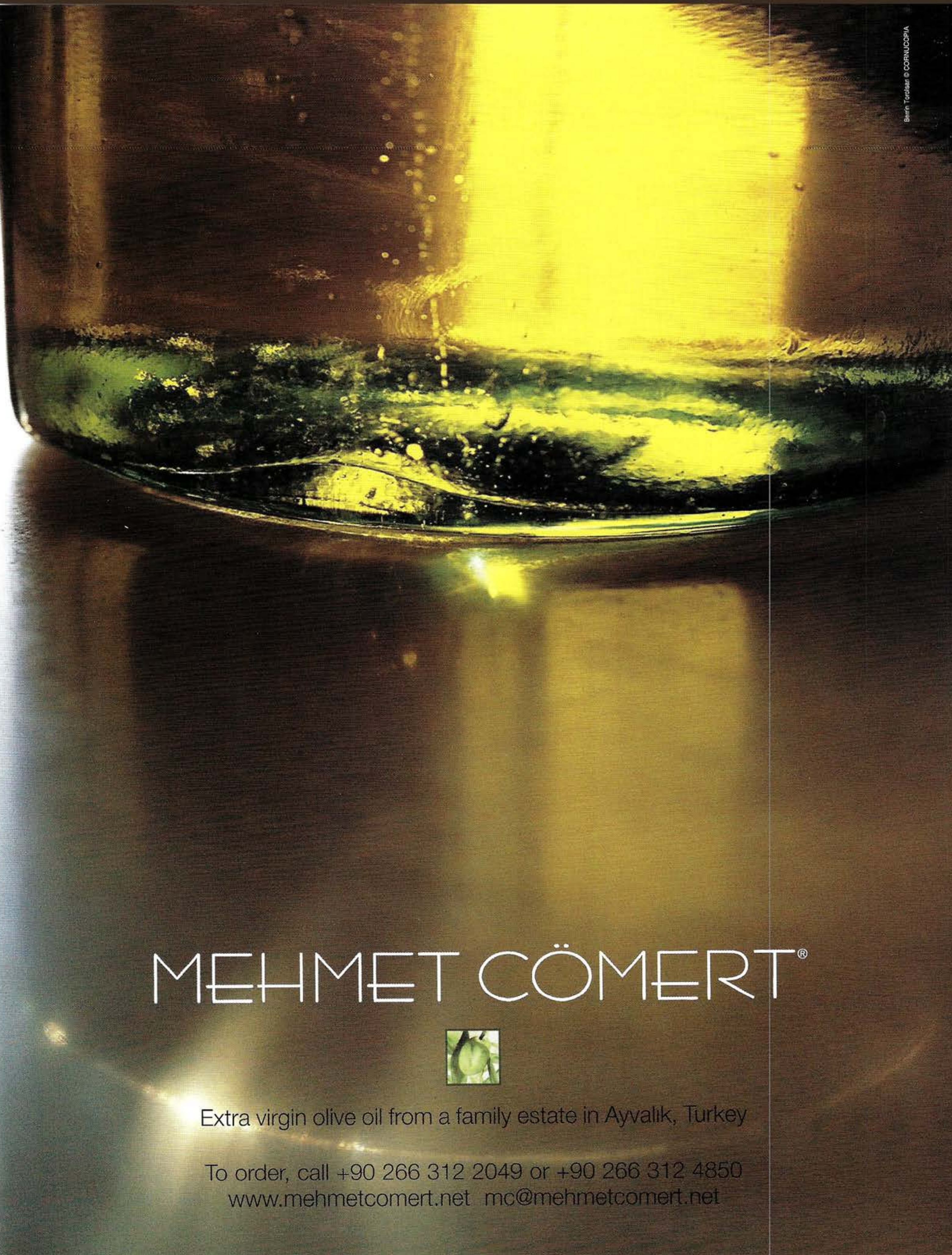
1 small celeriac
Yolk of 1 egg
Juice of 1 lemon
Salt
1/2 teaspoon mustard
4 tablespoons olive oil
2 tablespoons plain yoghurt

This contemporary version of rémoulade comes from my cousin, who even manages to get her teenage son to eat celeriac prepared this way. The mayonnaise is lightened by the addition of yoghurt and this salad makes a refreshing meze or a good accompaniment to cold meats.

1 Discard the top and root end, peel the celeriac and drop in a basin of water acidulated with a few drops of lemon juice or vinegar.

2 Prepare a light mayonnaise by beating the egg yolk with a pinch of salt and mustard and half the lemon juice. Whisking constantly, stir in the olive oil, followed by the yoghurt. Season to taste and add more lemon juice, salt or yoghurt if needed.

3 Grate the celeriac and stir into the mayonnaise. Mix and decorate the top with tiny pickled gherkins, capers or chopped fresh herbs.



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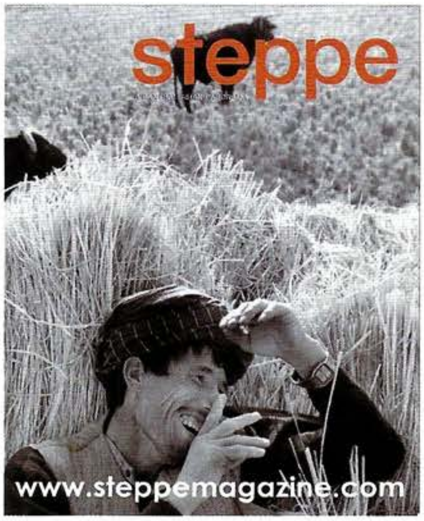

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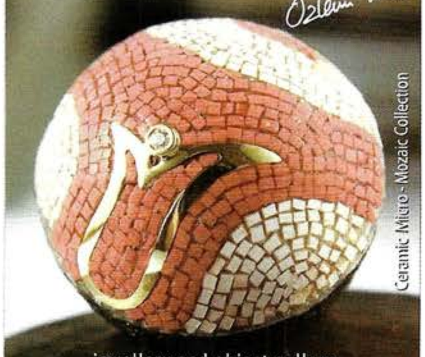

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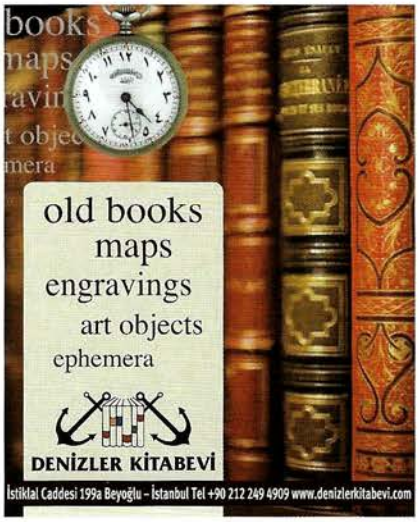

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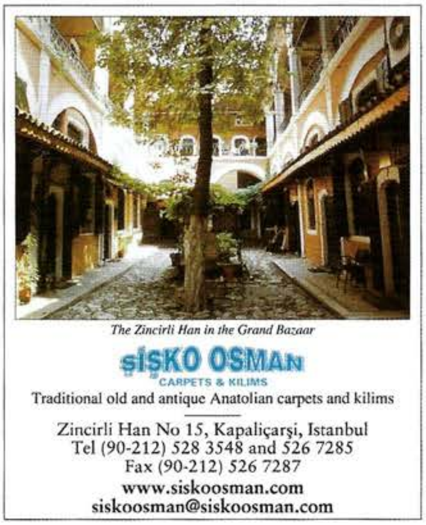

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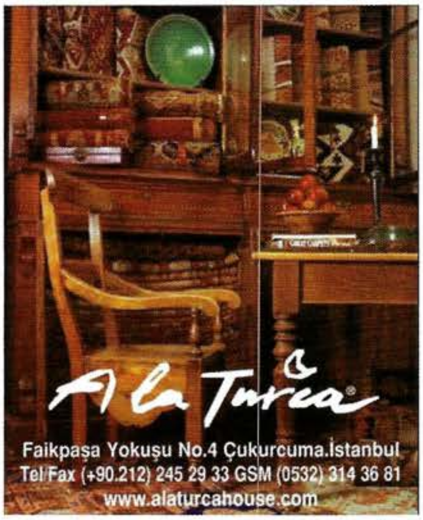

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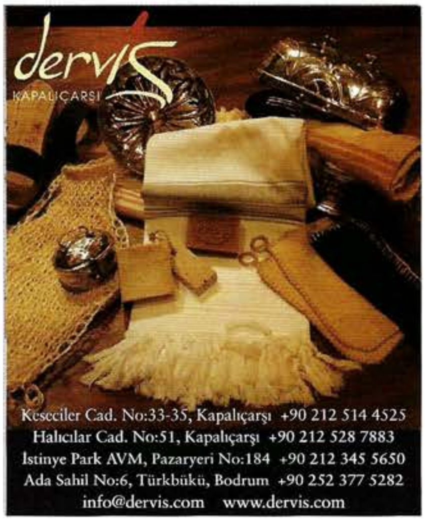

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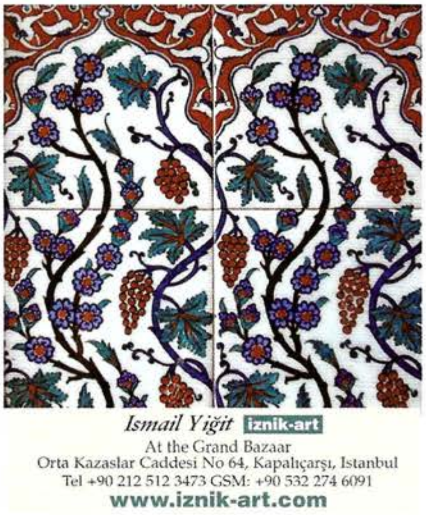

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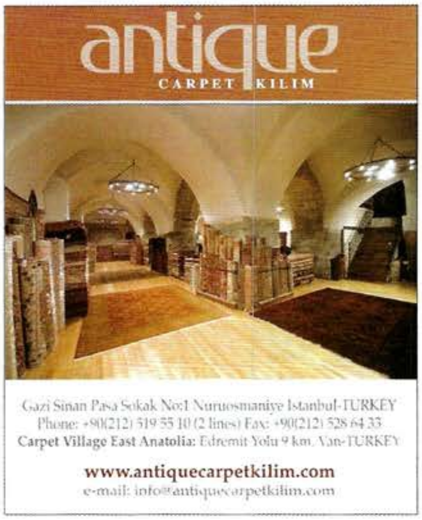

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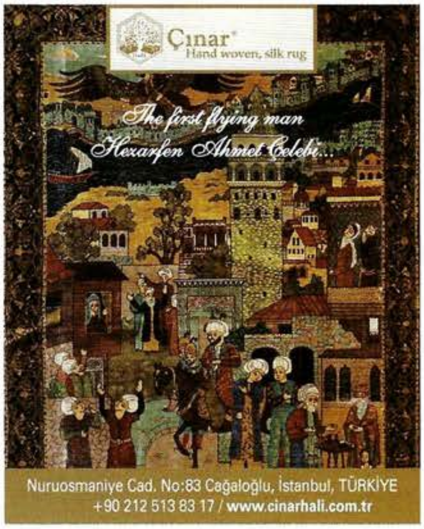

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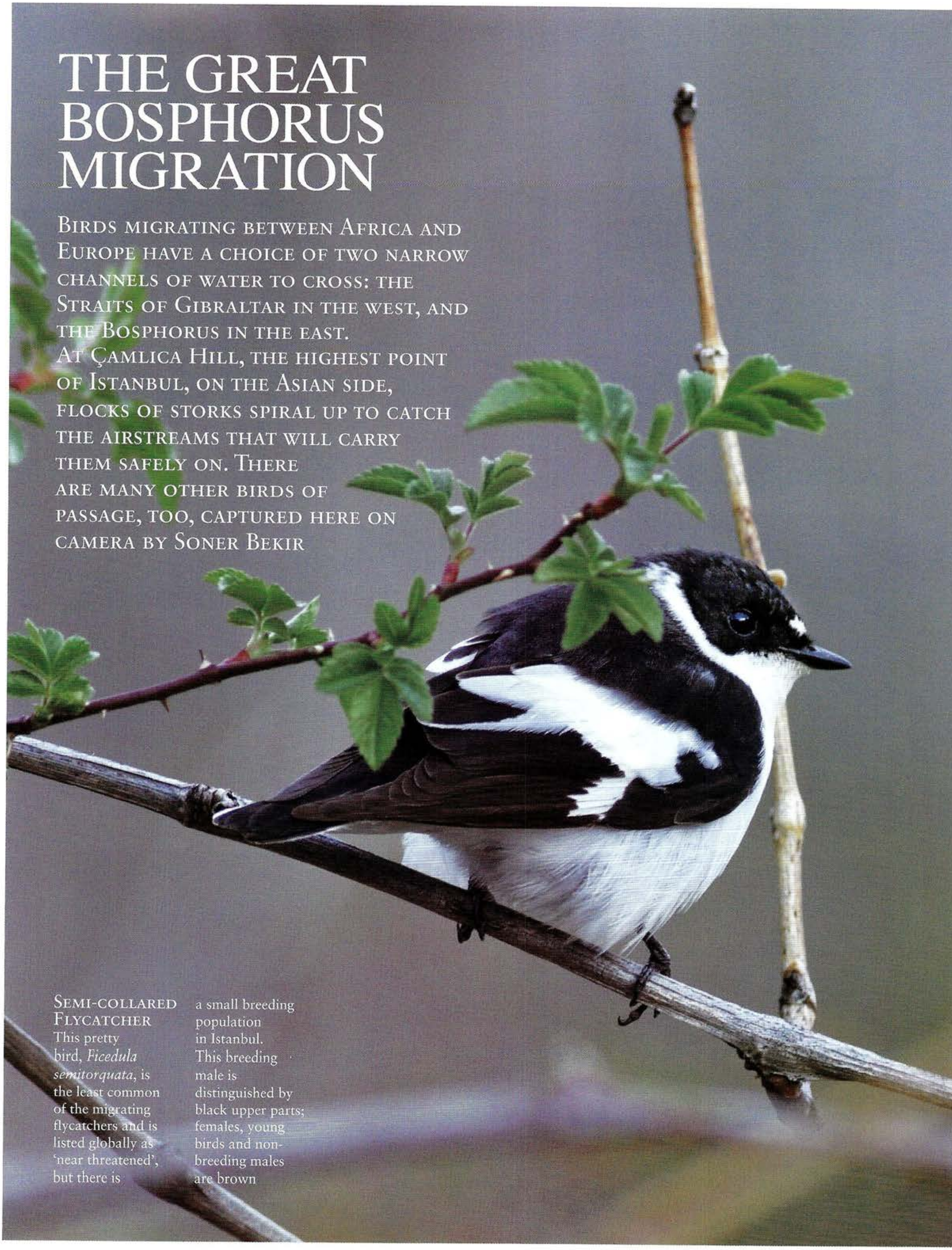
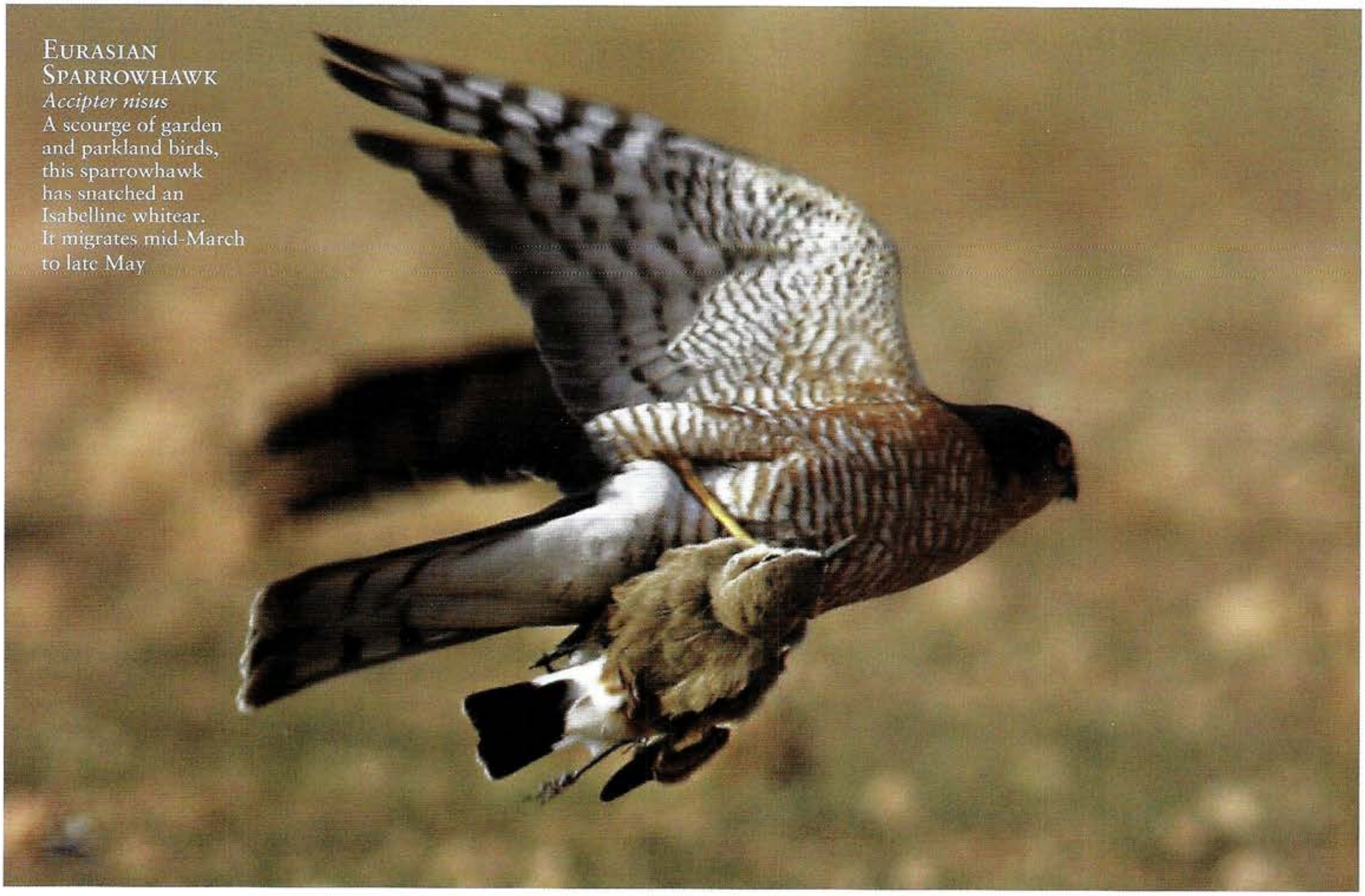
AT ÇAMLICA HILL, THE HIGHEST POINT OF ISTANBUL, ON THE ASIAN SIDE, FLOCKS OF STORKS SPIRAL UP TO CATCH THE AIRSTREAMS THAT WILL CARRY THEM SAFELY ON. THERE ARE MANY OTHER BIRDS OF PASSAGE, TOO, CAPTURED HERE ON CAMERA BY SONER BEKIR

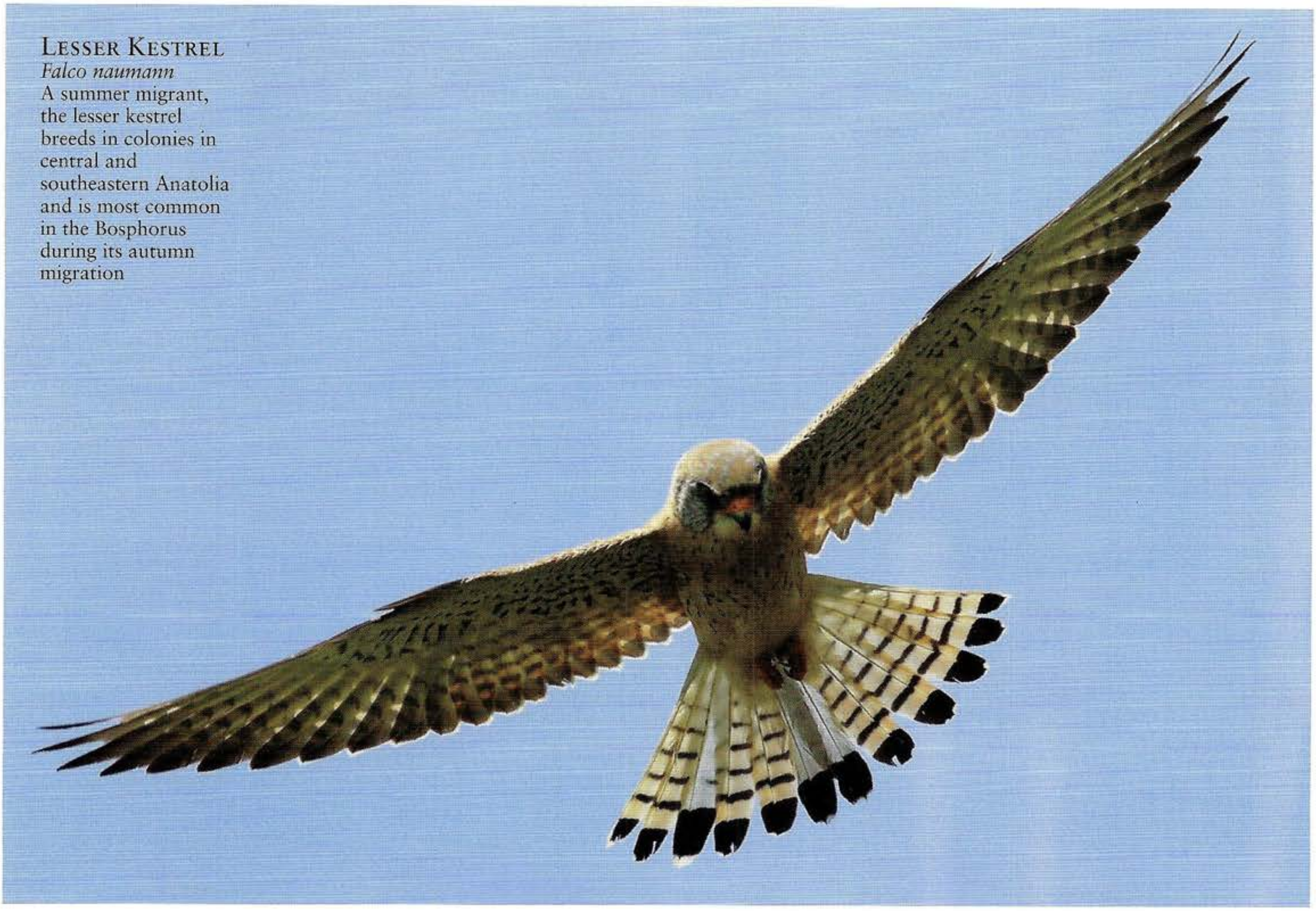


SEMI-COLLARED FLYCATCHER This pretty bird, *Ficedula semitorquata*, is the least common of the migrating flycatchers and is listed globally as 'near threatened', but there is a small breeding population in Istanbul. This breeding male is distinguished by black upper parts; females, young birds and non-breeding males are brown

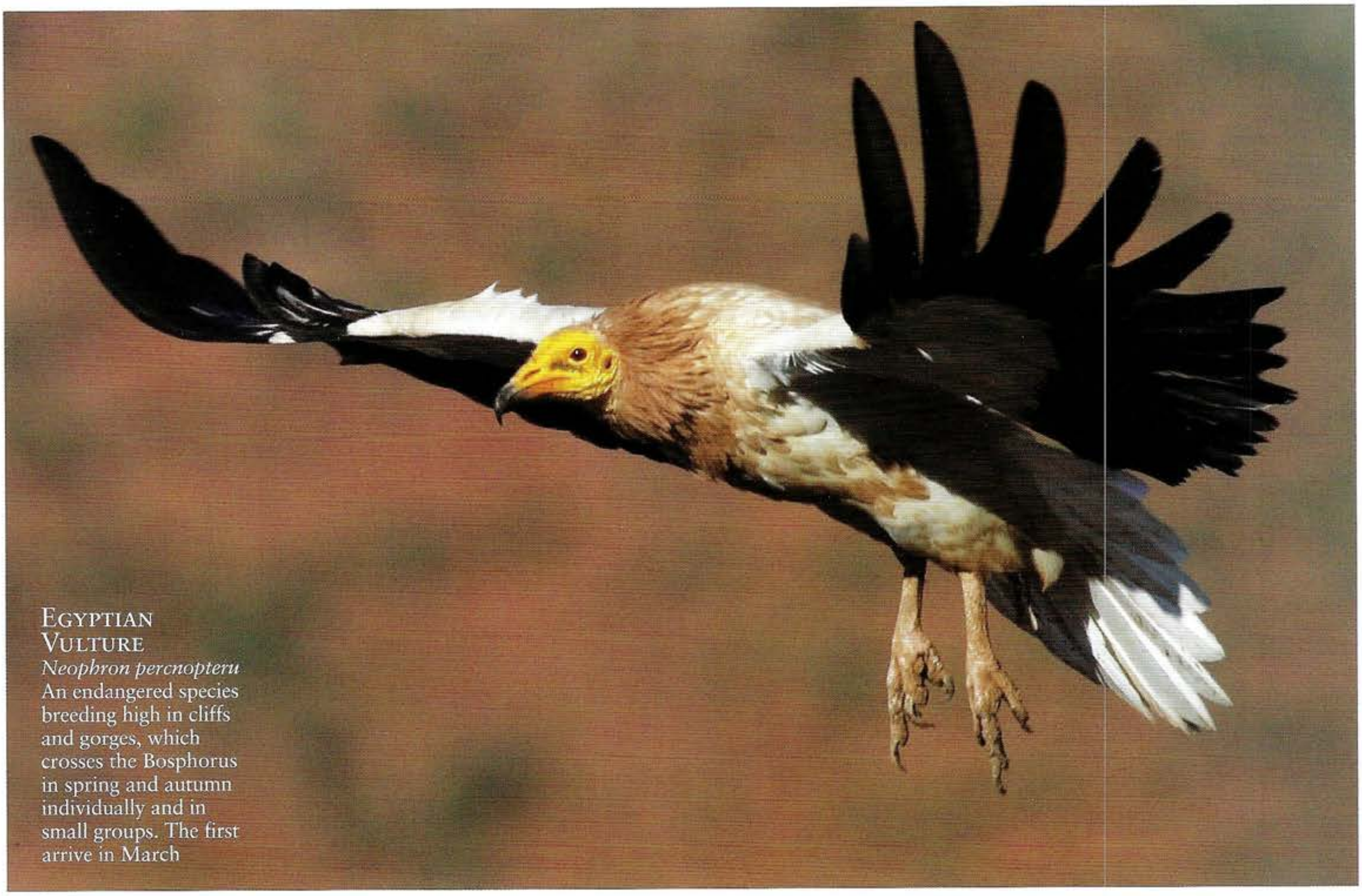
EUROPEAN BLACK KITE
This kite, *Milvus migrans*, winters south of the Sahara and is a common bird of passage and breeder in Turkey. It feeds on fish, frogs, birds and other small animals, carrying them away in its claws to eat



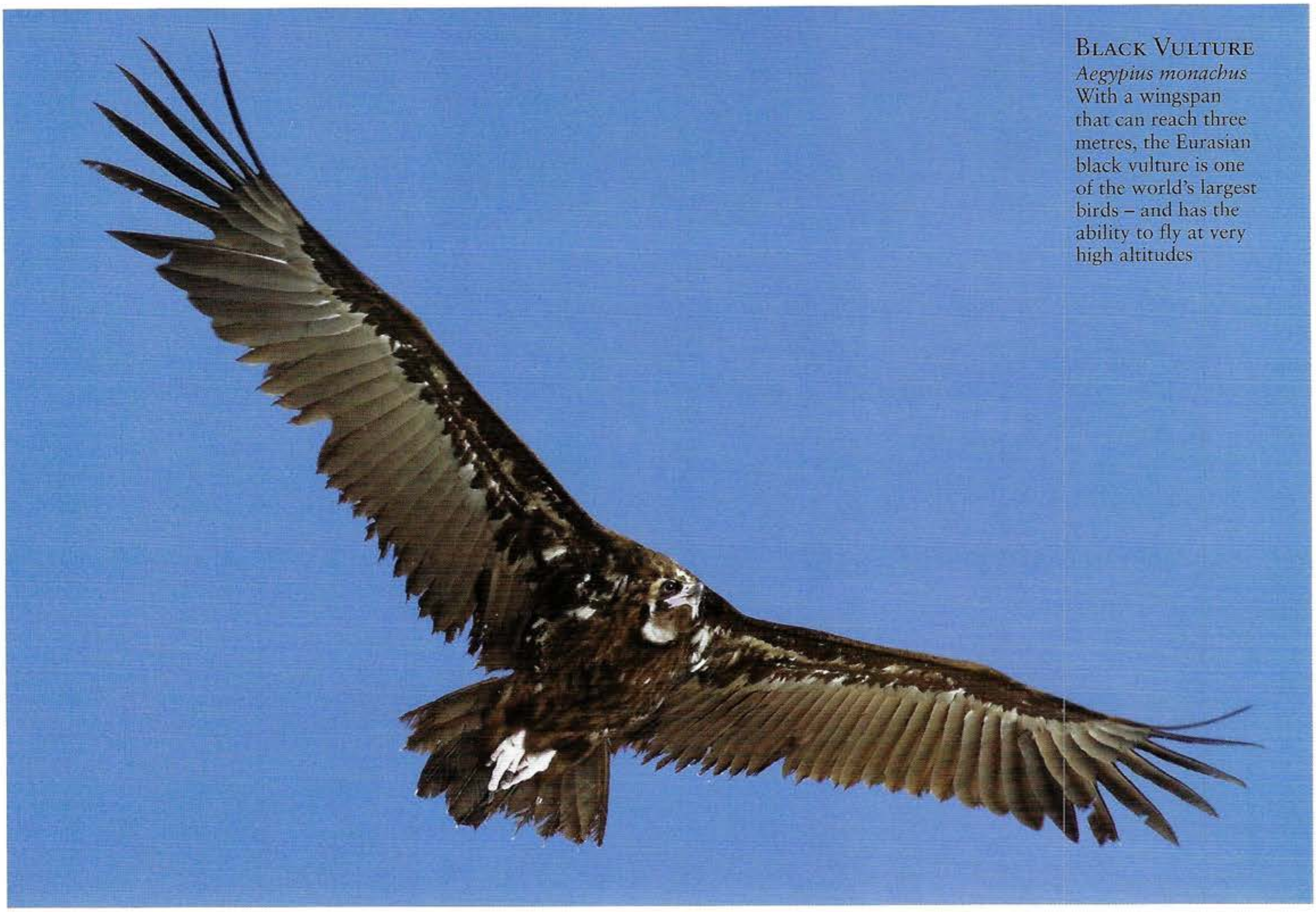
EURASIAN SPARROWHAWK
Accipter nisus
A scourge of garden and parkland birds, this sparrowhawk has snatched an Isabelline whitear. It migrates mid-March to late May



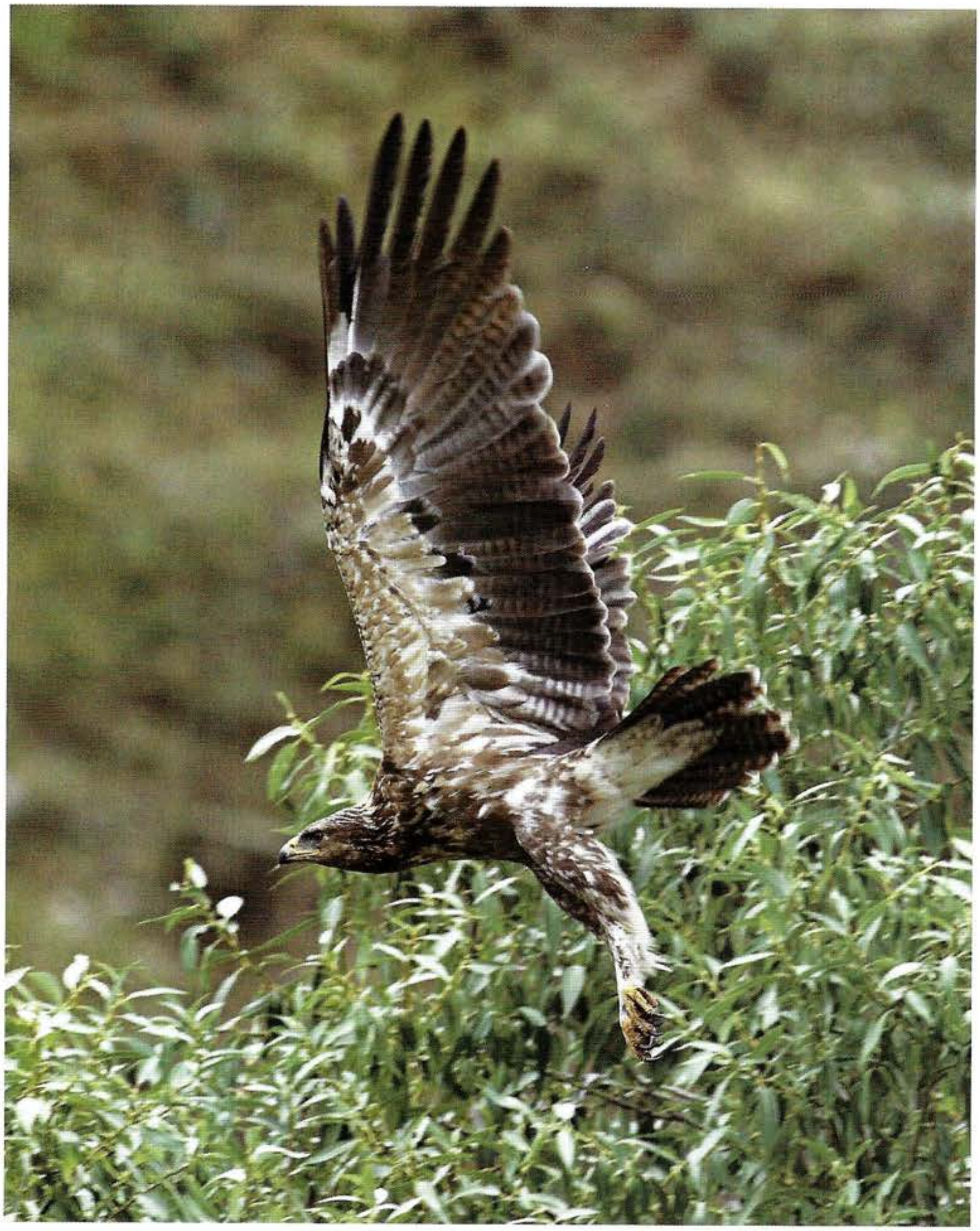
LESSER KESTREL
Falco naumann
A summer migrant, the lesser kestrel breeds in colonies in central and southeastern Anatolia and is most common in the Bosphorus during its autumn migration



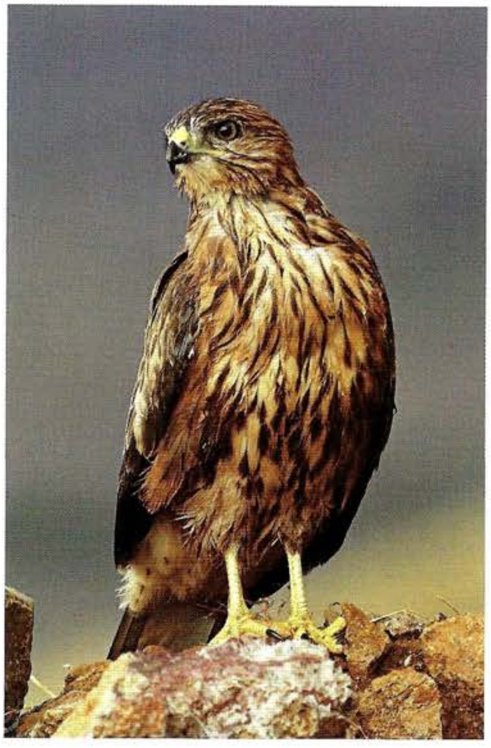
EGYPTIAN VULTURE
Neophron percnopteru
An endangered species breeding high in cliffs and gorges, which crosses the Bosphorus in spring and autumn individually and in small groups. The first arrive in March

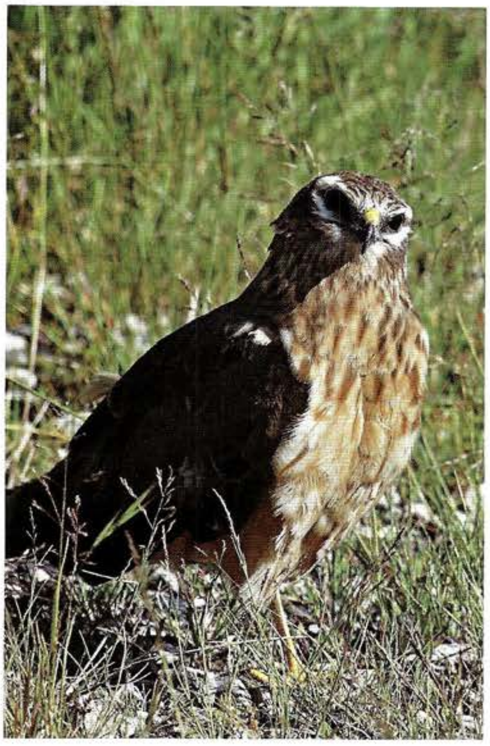


BLACK VULTURE
Aegypius monachus
With a wingspan that can reach three metres, the Eurasian black vulture is one of the world's largest birds – and has the ability to fly at very high altitudes



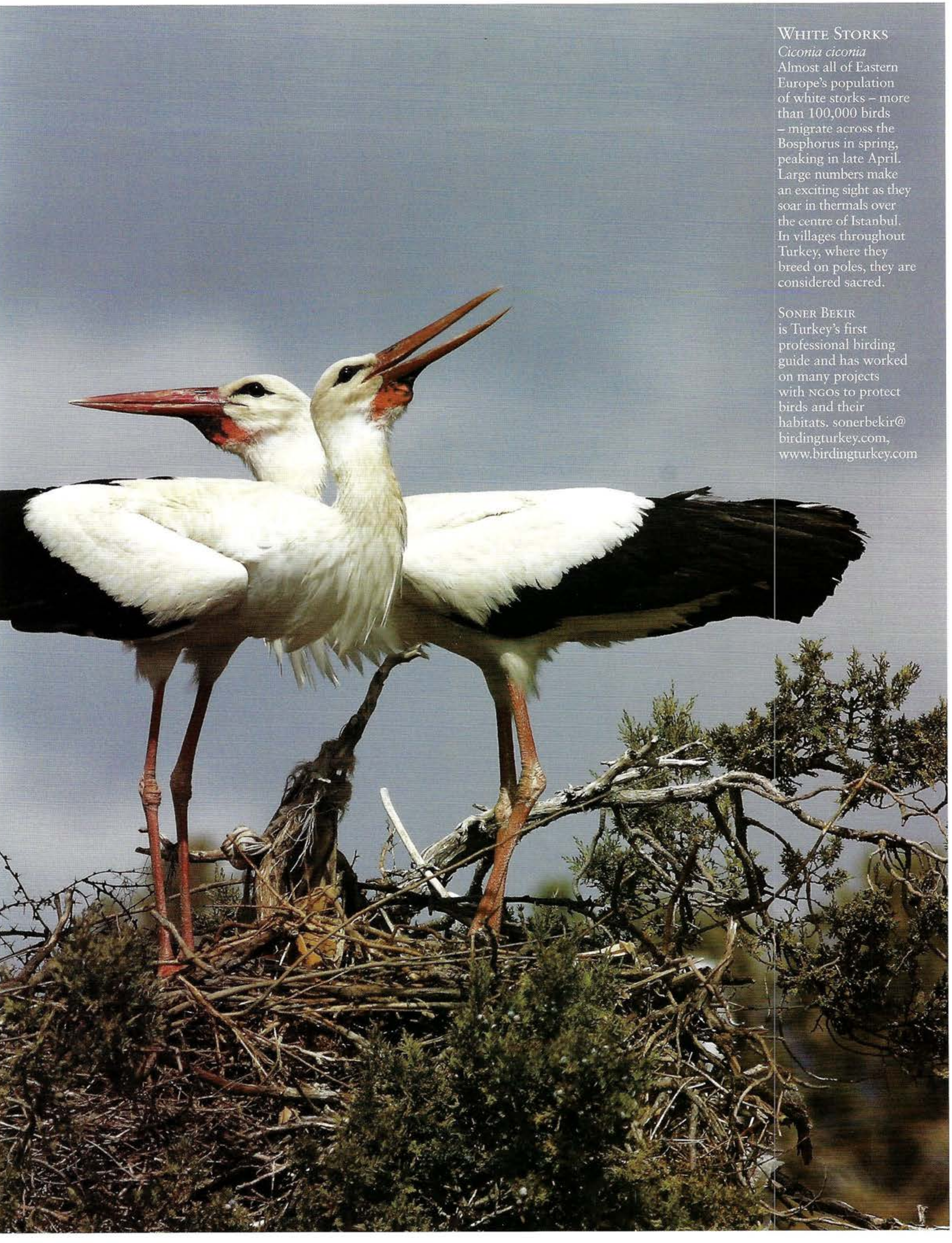
Common Buzzard
Buteo buteo
This is the most common migratory raptor, found all over Turkey. It breeds in woodland and hunts for small animals on open land





Far left
Eastern Imperial Eagle
Aquila heliaca
A regular bird of passage, but rarely observed

Left
Montagu's Harrier
Cyrcus pygargus
Widespread, often mixing with buzzards



WHITE STORKS
Ciconia ciconia
Almost all of Eastern Europe's population of white storks – more than 100,000 birds – migrate across the Bosphorus in spring, peaking in late April. Large numbers make an exciting sight as they soar in thermals over the centre of Istanbul. In villages throughout Turkey, where they breed on poles, they are considered sacred.

SONER BEKIR
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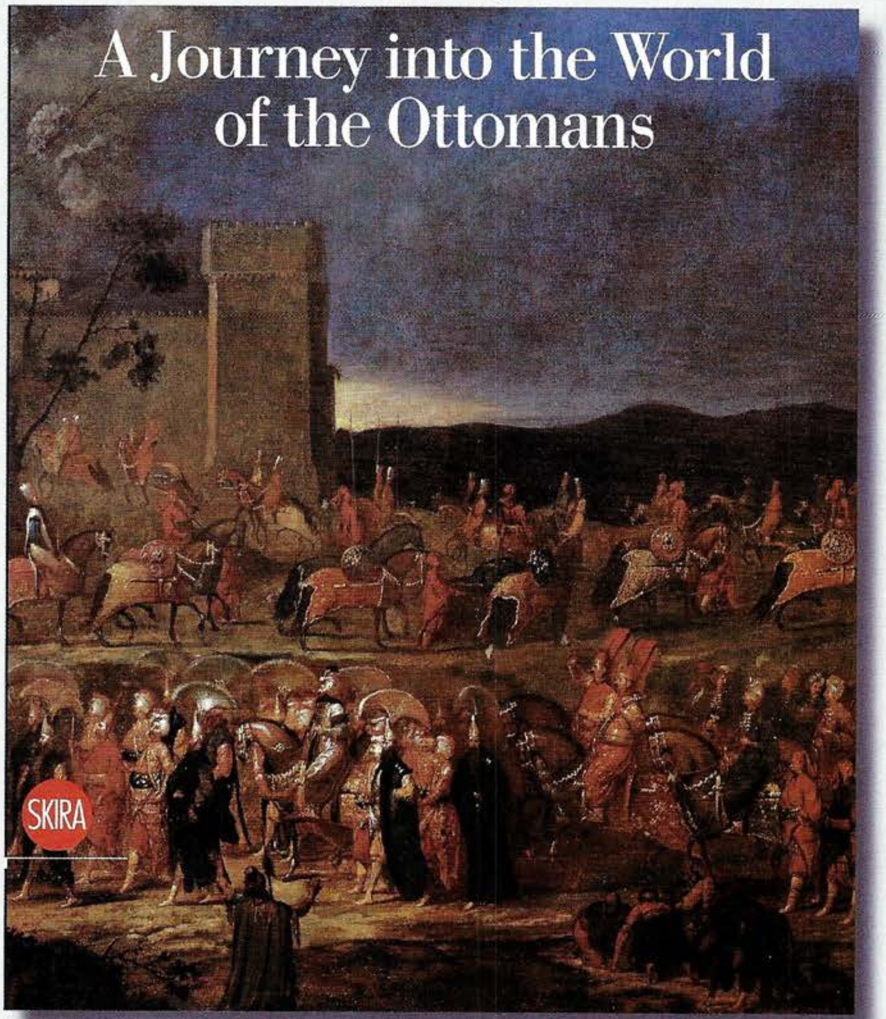
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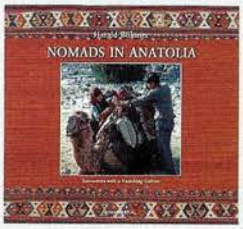
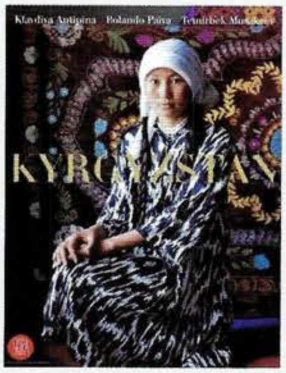

NOMADS IN ANATOLIA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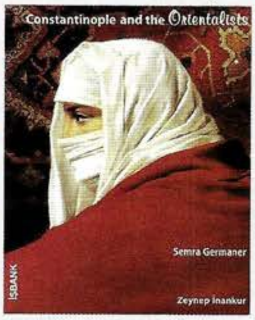
Constantinople and the Orientalists
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FLOWERS OF ANATOLIA
ANADOLU'NUN ÇİÇEKLERİ

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As the family say farewell to their much-loved farmhouse, Azize Ethem continues her diary from their new lakeside house near the village of Keramet, where she is getting to know the neighbours and the local gossip, and learning to harvest olives

VILLAGE VOICES

Goodbye to all that

The latter months of 2008 were chaotic and stressful for the Ethems. Our son Julian, living in Australia, broke his hip socket, and then Selim was very seriously ill. Once again the support of friends and neighbours was humbling.

We had been toying with the idea of selling our farmlet in Iznik: a smaller place with less land would mean we could lock the door and travel for a while. Our friend Nazlı offered to put it on a Turkish property website and, thinking it would take an age to sell, I sent her some photos and planned to forget the whole thing. There wasn't much time for forgetting. On the first day a man with a shirt unbuttoned to the navel and a gold chain any British mayor would be proud of put in an offer. I dithered: he was just not right for a place I loved so much. On the third day the friend given as a contact on the web page phoned to say he was taking a woman from Istanbul to see the place the next day.

Selim and I were in Istanbul, and late morning, when my phone rang, I expected it to be our friend, but it was the woman, introducing herself as Füsun. She spoke as if she knew us and I panicked – I am so bad with names and no bells were ringing, not even the faintest tinkle. She then explained that she was a CORNUCOPIA subscriber. Yes, definitely better than Mr Hairy Chest, I thought.

On the move

Füsun Hanım is now the (hopefully) proud owner of our Iznik home and we have moved 24 km along the lake towards Orhangazi. The new property is on the lake shore, next door to our friend Tayfun's mud-brick house, a kilometre from the village of Keramet.

To reach the lake shore and our new home there is a 400-metre track that wends its way through groves of olive trees, some hundreds of years old, with stout, gnarled trunks. The land is half the size of our old property, with 60 olive trees, rented to a local who pays us in olive oil. A farmer from another village leases the land under the trees to grow vegetables. At the moment there are 7,000 cauliflowers maturing there. These agreements mean the bulk of the land involves no toil on my part and leaves me a manageable area for the garden.

We lived in a neighbour's summerhouse for four months while teams of Georgians, Kurds and the occasional Turk built our new home. When it was time for plumbers to fit out the bathrooms, the contractor took me to a huge store selling plumbing supplies. Trolleys were provided and we made our way to the checkout with shower cubicles, bathroom cabinets, lavatories and fixtures, all balanced in half a dozen trolleys.

We moved in yesterday and I am sitting with my laptop on the kitchen table, looking out across the lake. There is little in the kitchen but the table, for Mehmet the carpenter is somewhat late with the promised cupboards and shelves. There have been few glitches.

The steps to the terrace are of a normal height involving no athletic leaps; the painters painted the walls without painting the floor, though it was disconcerting when I pulled out the bathplug, stepped over the side and met the bathwater gushing across the floor.

Ahead of the game

Before we left Iznik I was warned not to cancel my ADSL connection. It must have been a particularly fraught day, because later I couldn't remember who had said it or why, but I continued to pay the monthly rental fee. In Orhangazi, when we applied for a telephone line, I was told all the Keramet ADSL lines were in use but more would come in over the next month or so. There were 33 applicants waiting, the woman told us, but because I hadn't cancelled my Iznik subscription I go to the top of the list. Wheeeeeeee! God bless whoever it was gave me that advice. An American visitor tells me she can't get a connection as she lives 12 km from the nearest large town. Well, we are further than that from a sizable town. It must be difficult for her living in such a backward country.

Getting to know the neighbours

With the move come new locals to meet and new adventures. Osman, our olive man, is the local Mr Fix-It. Osman is a font of knowledge and can drag up village gossip from days of yore. Always ready to help, he sits in his shop in the village and holds court with a plentiful supply of *çay*, brought from the teahouse. He sells coal, bottled water, olives, olive oil, empty plastic containers and string.

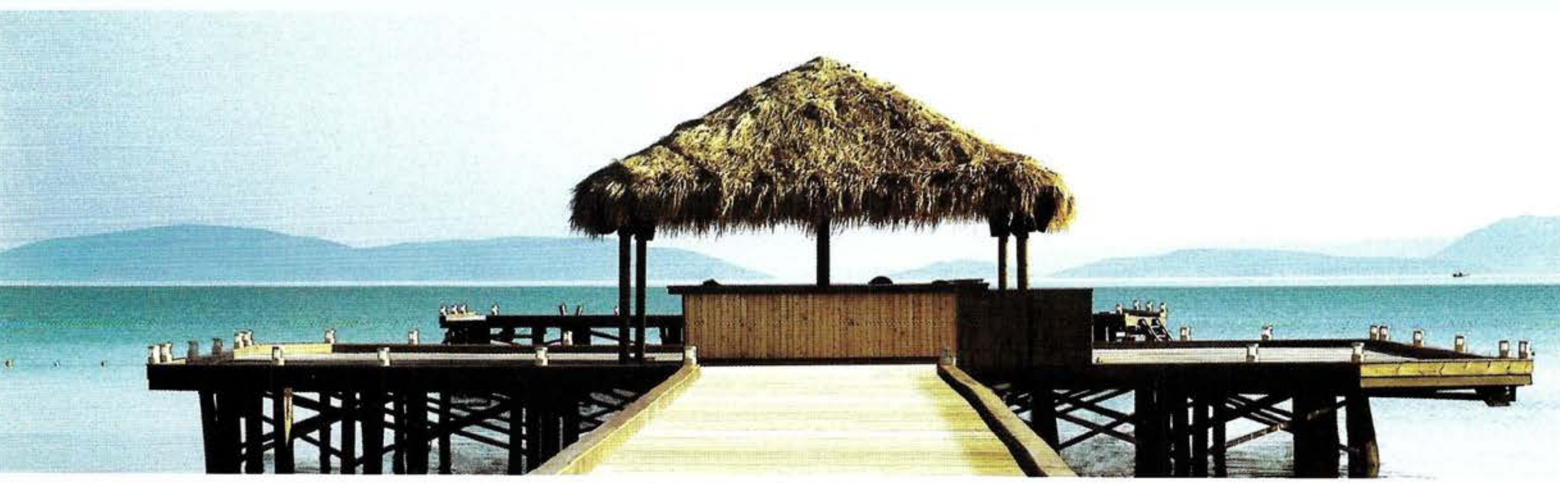
Next door to Osman's emporium is the gas-bottle shop, to whose owner Osman does not speak. So if one orders bottled water and gas bottles the two men will arrive in their separate vehicles, studiously ignoring each other.

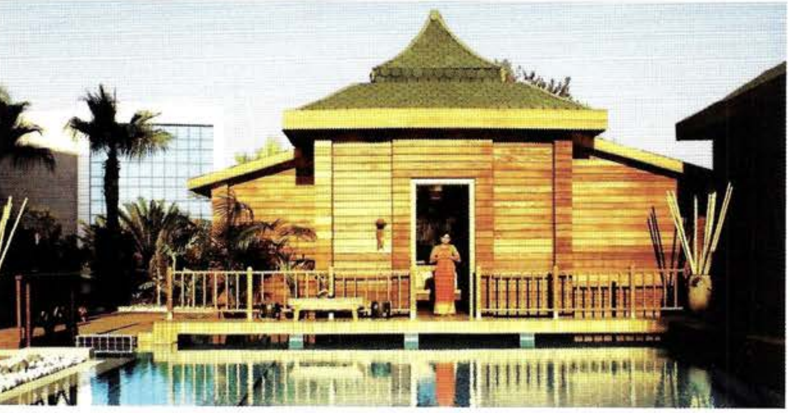
Keramet is a village of less than 2,000 souls, but the responsibilities of office weigh heavy on the *muhtar*'s shoulders. He is a man of great importance and expects us newcomers to hang on his every word. A couple of hundred metres along the shore lives 81-year-old Mehmet Bey. He is profoundly deaf and only recognises people from half a metre away. Unfortunately he also drives, and regularly has accidents. Last week he bought a new car, against the advice of friends. Fortunately he doesn't use the same lane as we do, so we are unlikely to have a head-on collision, though one must keep a sharp eye out on the highway.

Harvest time

Tayfun has several mature grapevines and each year he makes 30 or 40 bottles of wine. It involves a lot of crushing, then, after the sticky mess has fermented for a few weeks, it is sieved through muslin several times before being bottled. Yesterday was tasting day, but unfortunately this year he has 30 bottles of vinegar. Not very good vinegar at that. At the end of summer I helped him collect his olives and learnt what those large rake-like combs in the hardware stores are for. With my rakey-comb-thing I literally combed the olives off the lower branches into a huge net draped under the trees.

For two days I combed while Tayfun teetered on a ladder, combing the higher branches.





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Packed into crates, the olives were taken to the local press, where he waited to bring home his fresh olive oil. Driving down the track, I watched women in voluminous *şalvar* laughing and shouting to each other as they precariously balanced on tall ladders and stretched to reach the branches. They must be the countryside's equivalent of those cleaning women in Istanbul who balance on window ledges far above the street as they clean apartment windows.

City break

In early January, Julian arrived with his wife and children for a week, along with daughter Sara and son-in-law Sean from London. As we didn't have a house then, we all stayed in a little hotel in Sultanahmet. It was a week-long marathon as we went from site to site, doing the Istanbul tourist trail.

A friend arranged a VIP tour of the Dolmabahçe Palace for us. We were welcomed with due ceremony and, as well as our guide, had a police escort. A family photograph was taken of us all clustered on a gold, red-carpeted staircase, and the huge chandeliers and baroque décor were much appreciated by our grandchildren. I enjoyed immensely being a VIP for a few hours. We toured Topkapı and the Military Museum. The only jarring note was that, though a chunk of money had been spent on the displays, the English translations needed proofreading. One pamphlet had a group of Australians almost rolling on the floor. What the phrase was in Turkish I have no idea, but in English it was obscene.

Fireman's holiday

I read that Turkey is one of the countries least hit by the financial crisis, and daily I am amazed by the talk of billions. One elderly friend of Selim's has lost half his nest egg: he only

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has four million dollars left to see him through his old age. Sara is an investment banker and was able to explain sub-prime mortgages, hedge funds, credit risk and a lot of other things which were a complete mystery to me. As I write this in late February, she is still employed, but the sword of Damocles hangs above her and her colleagues.

Julian, who is a dentist, has after an intensive course become a fireman. As soon as he could walk he became a fully fledged pyromaniac, so putting out fires is a sensible progression. He carries a pager and unless he is with a patient he is off at a moment's notice. He brought with him from Australia several firemen's caps. I didn't realise that firefighters have baseball caps as well as helmets. The males in a party went to the Old Galata Bridge Fire Station, where they were welcomed and treated to tea. Tea completed, the hat-exchange ritual was performed and then it was off to inspect the fire trucks. Julian was most impressed with a small fire engine that could go sideways as well as forward. This is used for old streets which are too narrow for a regular-sized truck and cost a cool million US dollars. The four of them returned proudly wearing their new hats with photographs of themselves perched on fire engines.

Snow time

Now we are back in the countryside. The weather forecast promises us a week of snow, so it is time to hunker down in front of the fire and go through the seed catalogue. Turning the wilderness in front of the house into a garden will be hard work. But not yet – now is the time to hibernate.

'Beyond the Orchard', a book of Azize Ethem's stories, published by Çitlembik–Nettleberry, is offered to Cornucopia subscribers post-free at £6.50

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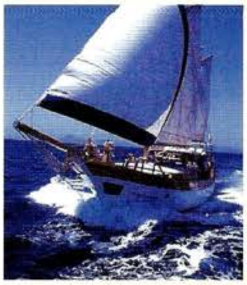

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The style revolution

ANDREW FINKEL SAMPLES AN IMPRESSIVE NEW GENERATION OF PLACES TO EAT THAT ARE BRINGING 21ST-CENTURY CHIC AND TEMPTING NEW TASTES TO ISTANBUL

What was once a refuge for the cliquish few now provides shelter for a mass movement. I began to sense there was a revolution afoot when within the space of a week I received separate invitations to 1) coffee 2) a bite of lunch 3) a drink in The House Café. THC made its way into this magazine several years ago as a somewhere where the up-and-coming could step off an Istanbul sidewalk into a world of Lower Manhattan cool. There were long tables, comfortable chairs, brownies, bean salads and the day's specials chalked on the wall. It was the sort of place where you tried to read the paper through the fog of the previous night's hangover or whipped out the laptop to write that first novel. Since then, the single House on the fashionable fringes of Nişantaşı has become a virtual Housing estate: there are now 10 in Istanbul and the first one has opened up Ankara. By the time you finish this paragraph there will probably be one outside your door.

Unquestionably, THCs succeed through their sense of style. It's the interiors that win the day. Designed by the clever architectural firm Autoban, they give the period feel of a golden age – what Istanbul should have looked like had it not, somewhere around 1947, taken a wrong turn. The floors are wood and encaustic tile. The rough-plastered pillars are whitewashed, then stencilled with a decorative border. There is a mix of individual and communal tables. Even the enormous branch in Beyoğlu has the atmosphere of a private but informal club. You certainly don't feel you are in a Starbucks. For a start the service is pretty slow – this is fast food for people with all the time in the world.

The food is careful but middlebrow, with a few extra touches to justify above-average prices. I had a fishburger that was satisfactory, light and fluffy, but it fell apart in the bun. An extremely fussy Italian friend of mine swears by the prosciutto and fresh fig pizza, as well as the lentil and goat cheese salad. Apparently the chicken schnitzel is the hottest-selling item. I suspect regular patrons don't eat their way through the menu but find something they like then order it again and again.

THC now markets its own jams and olive oil, coffee and other generic foodie basics. Even a curmudgeon like me doesn't begrudge THC its success. I prefer it to the rival chain Kitchenette. It has the Ben-and-Jerry feel of a good small idea writ large, rather than a conglomerate pretending to be authentic and down to earth.

The House Café's executive chef, Coşkun Uysal, has his own dream café, or at least a restaurant that he and fellow chef Esra Muslu can call their own. Moreish is lodged in the Tepebaşı NuPera building – a small dining-room but bursting with ambition. I have moaned before in this column that the Istanbul restaurant scene rewards formula and "concept" rather than encouraging individual talent. People look at who owns the restaurant rather than who is actually working in the kitchen. Apart from the humblest *lokanta*, they are rarely the same person – and not always then. Proprietor-chefs who are the mainstay of the European restaurant scene, and who account for the lion's share of Michelin entrie, simply don't exist in Turkey. Except in Moreish.

Moreish is unashamedly fusion, but with the exception of the chorizo purée lingering in the smoked aubergine soup, more a rainbow coalition of flavours than of ethnic cuisines. Root vegetables play a strong supporting role. Roasted Jerusalem artichokes are a pedestal for a slice of *lagos* (grouper), parsnips streak their way through the menu and celariac purée sits beside the scallops. There is a thick smudge of red carrot purée with the red mullet and even an obelisk of beetroot sorbet alongside the chocolate tarte. And, reassuringly, mashed potatoes come with the steak. The plates are carefully composed, in the genre which takes its lead from the child's obsession with not having the gravy touch the veg. There is a line of *firik* – the smoke-dried wheat grain with a deep, attractive flavour that doesn't actually look like cocaine on a mirror but could be inspired by the same school. I was very pleased by the juxtaposition of my steamed piece of monkfish on a bed of veal-cheek stew with a meat demi-glace, and only wished I had the temerity to ask for more. The desserts are sweet with something savoury to cut the cloy, like the scoop of blue-cheese ice cream that accompanied the crunchy cooked pear on a thin pastry.

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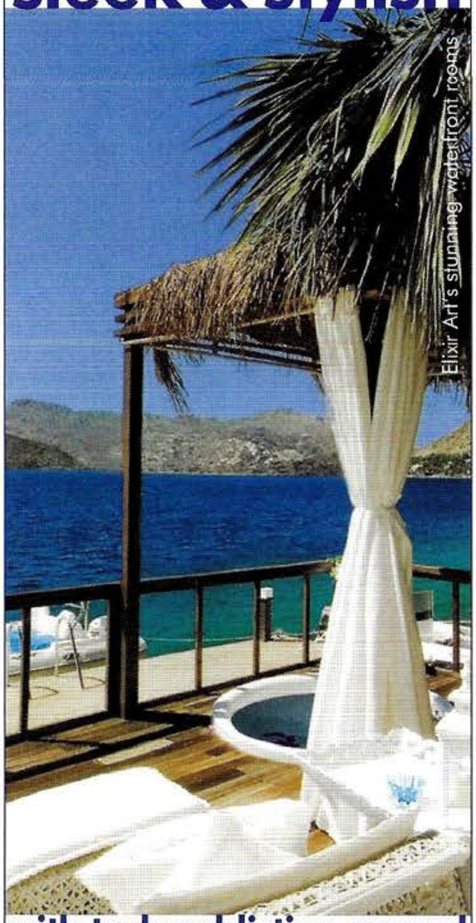

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Sometimes the chef's artfulness crosses the line into self-parody. That was the case with the match-head cubes of salted bonito (*lakerda*) arranged like measles beside the scallop. I can see how this could get on some people's nerves, particularly those who arrive with a bib round their neck, not to taste but to eat. My own instinct is to cheer Moreish on, to encourage Uysal and Muslu to be bolder still in their flavours and a touch more generous with their portions. This is really a restaurant where there should be a set menu – the chefs should take charge not just of the plate but of the whole meal.

Foolish to complain about artfully arranged food in a place where it all began. It was with a sigh of relief that I learned that Ninja, one of Istanbul's first Japanese restaurants, has found a new home after it was forced out of the Talimhane side of Taksim by vandals digging up the streets for new hotels. It is now on the other side of the square, on the picturesque side of the street opposite Aya Triyada church.

The old Ninja was all slate floors and Eastern austerity. Owner Eyüp Akgün has the sense not to tamper with the elegant Levantine feel of its new premises, and the Japanese furniture and curtained booths sit comfortably in the building's comfortable postwar rooms. The main change is in the bigger menu, including some Chinese dishes. There is also a street-level basement that has been turned into a small Udon noodle bar and, I imagine, somewhere to wait for takeaway sushi.

I've had the bean-curd hotpot and enjoyed the tempura, but the fish at Ninja is just very good – the salmon and tuna striped with fat, the sea bass buttery, and I am partial to the eel. I have been back on a few occasions and worked contentedly through a full bowl of *chirashi*. Mr Akgün is a man I admire and although he has an understated way, gleaned from his adopted homeland, he cannot conceal the glint in his eye. I believe that it is not so much passion that makes for a good restaurant as obsession. He is clearly a man on a mission to get things right. His enthusiasm is infectious. I saw one of the waiters rush out to greet a Japanese couple perusing the menu posted outside. The smile of pleasure on his face as he addressed them in a language which was not his own suggested he was not there to tout but to spread the word.

Ninja is not cheap and it would be irresponsible in these recessionary times to ignore the establishments around the corner that are in their own way just as stylish. The Bambi chain of sandwich buffets ("*büfe*") have undergone a remake, complete with a doe-eyed deer logo and glowing pink plastic portico. So what if they take their cultural cues from a truck stop off the M16 or a fresh juice parlour in Baghdad? Besides, the toasted-sandwich shop has an honourable place in the socialisation of schoolchildren in Turkey. Buying your first sliced *döner* or cheese *tost* with the first few lira in your pocket is as important a rite of passage as your first kiss. The aroma of sizzling margarine, gently smeared over the bread in the waffle-iron-like grill gives the corrugated bread extra crunch, and is as exquisitely evocative of adolescence as was the taste of a madeleine to Proust.

The Bambi is a particularly attractive version of the genre, and so popular that there are several outlets neighbouring each other along the "sandwich row" off Taksim Square. The furnishings are aluminium-framed chairs, bright lights and lots of mirrors. The choice is huge and the menus set beneath the glass tabletops are an endless invitation to sample Dagwood-style delights – including one arrangement that contains sausage, salami, cheese, tomato, pickle, ketchup and mayonnaise. One bizarre concoction is the "wet burger", in which the beef patty is inserted in a small bun that has been allowed to soak up its weight in tomato broth. The more conservative stick a toasted mix of cheese and garlicky *suçuk* sausage. That and a glass of freshly squeezed pomegranate juice (best to cut the sourness with some fresh orange) beats the pants of a Big Mac. It's not just for kids. Bambi is where members of the state theatre across the street spend their Sodexo luncheon vouchers. And so should all of us. ◆

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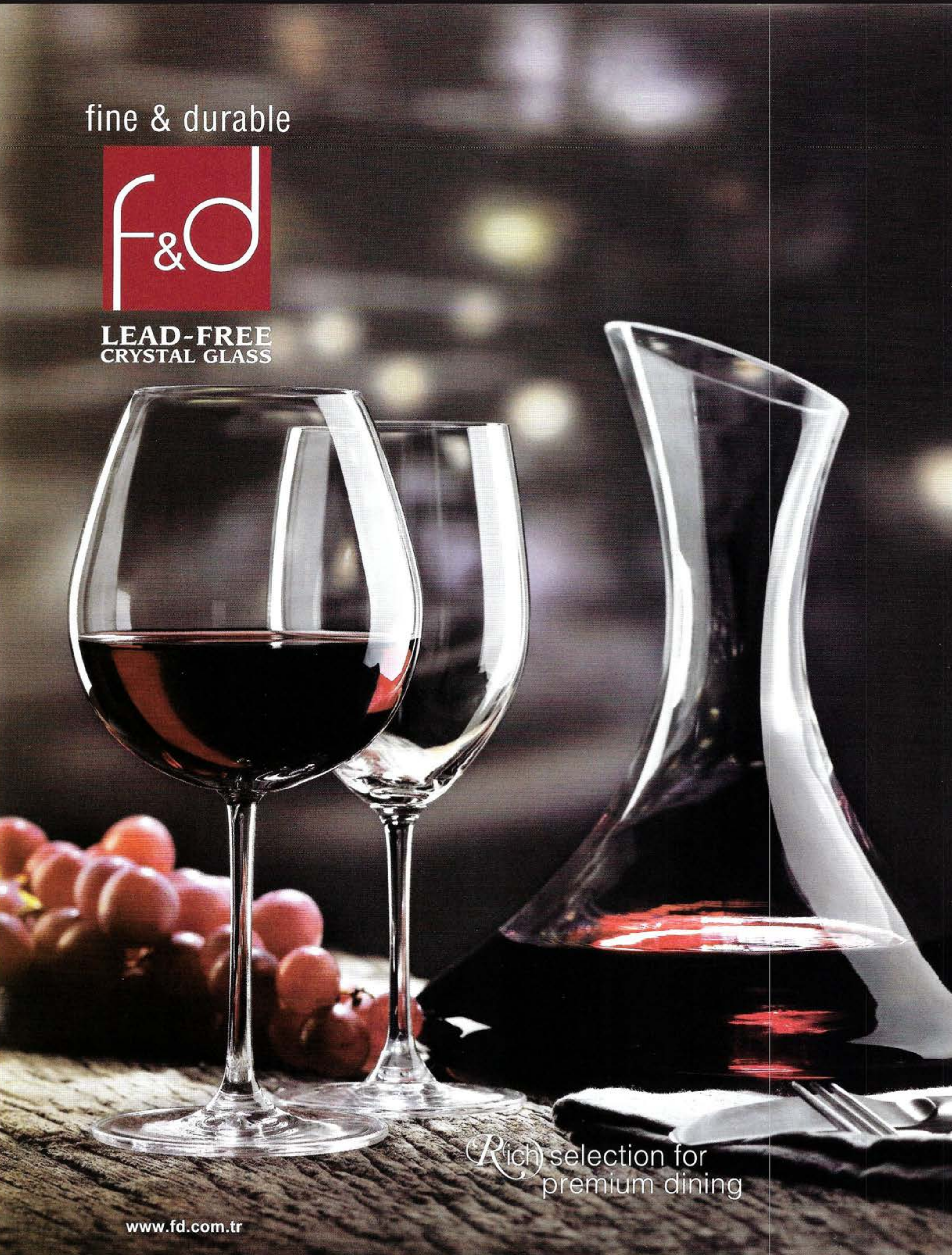

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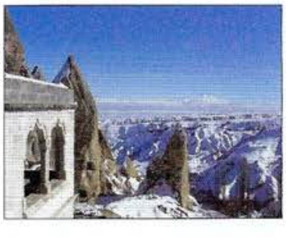

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